

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }
Volume XLII. }

No. 2026.—April 21, 1883.

{ From Beginning,
Vol. CLVII. }

CONTENTS.

I. JONATHAN SWIFT,	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i>	. . . . .	131
II. THE WIZARD'S SON,	<i>Macmillan's Magazine,</i>	. . . . .	147
III. SCENES DURING THE WINTER OF 1794-5,	<i>Temple Bar,</i>	. . . . .	179
IV. SIR GEORGE JESSEL,	<i>Spectator,</i>	. . . . .	189
V. SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM AT GENEVA,	<i>Spectator,</i>	. . . . .	191

POETRY.

LAMENT,	130 |	THE OLD WASHERWOMAN,	130
-------------------	-----	--------------------------------	-----

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
LITTELL & CO., BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

For EIGHT DOLLARS, *remitted directly to the Publishers*, the LIVING AGE will be punctually forwarded for a year, *free of postage*.

Remittances should be made by bank draft or check, or by post-office money-order, if possible. If neither of these can be procured, the money should be sent in a registered letter. All postmasters are obliged to register letters when requested to do so. Drafts, checks and money-orders should be made payable to the order of LITTELL & Co.

Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 13 cents.

LAMENT

OF ONE WHO COULD GO OUT ONLY IN A BATH-CHAIR, THE DOCTOR RECOMMENDING THE MORNING; BUT ONCE BEING OUT ON A JANUARY AFTERNOON, HE FELT SOME SADNESS AT TASTING A PLEASURE WHICH HE HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN.

OH, let me, as I ought to, grieve
For loss of thee, dear time of eve;
Let me be thankful as I ought
For forced remembrance and sad thought.
The quiet passionate evening time
Has been my love and oft my rhyme;
The orient day's divine ascent
I have loved with less of love's content;
More like our life and so more sweet
This time when earth and heaven so meet.

Almost did I — oh, sin! — forget
The dim delight of the sunset;
The round sun lingering misty red
Ere in the sea he sinks to bed;
The tremor and the blush upon
The sea, expecting the red sun;
The movement of that hour so still;
The sense that goes before the will,
And thoughts that heavy lag behind,
And bring the quiet to the mind;
And what delights the eye not least,
The gloom of the deserted east,
All empty of the glorious sun,
And darkness seen where morning shone.
The hill that, tip-toe, did defy
With rugged head the early sky,
Now in the gentle mist more great,
Leans down on earth with all its weight;
And here the old street slumbers deep,
And red-tiled cottages asleep
Look lazy, lost, and quieted
In drowsy dreams of ages dead.
And still the setting light is kind,
And somehow finds its way behind
To where the cottage children play
Forgetful of the serious day,
And all with serious love intent
On strife that bursts in merriment.
Oh, listen to the noise that's made
Where those thick bushes make thick shade!
The birds have something they must say
Before the light has gone away.

Before the light is gone away
Let love bring joy that loves delay;
The pensive sister of dear sorrow,
She weeps to-day to laugh to-morrow.
And now no longer do I grieve
For loss of thee, dear time of eve,
Since more than all I lost I find
In this forgiving evening kind,
This dying winter afternoon,
Unlike late-lasting joy of June,
And lovely with a likeness lent
That leaves it less and different.
No little beauty this, though less
Than summer's more than sweet excess;
No loss, this lovely difference
That suits it to my present sense.

Seldom and dear to me the sight
Of day adorn'd to meet the night.
'Tis sweeter now and much more dear
Than former summer evenings were,
When often, with surprise I met
The sudden joy of the sunset;
And when the color'd light was gone,
Then joy and I were left alone
In silent conversation free,
And thoughts of things I never see.

HENRY PATMORE.

THE OLD WASHERWOMAN.

"DIE ALTE WASCH-FRAU."

SEE, busy with her linen there,
Yes, busier far than all her peers,
In spite of age and snow-white hair,
In spite of six and seventy years,
An ancient woman who has gained
The daily bread which life demands,
Within the sphere that God ordained,
By sweat of brow, and toil of hands,
She in her youth has had her day,
Has loved and hoped, and met her mate,
Has walked along her woman's way,
Grim Care still following, sure as fate;
Has borne her husband children three,
Has nursed him in his sickness sore,
Her faith and hope undimmed, when he
Sank to his rest forevermore.

Children must bred and nourished be —
She bravely buckled to her task;
Reared them to honest industry,
Best heritage the poor can ask;
Then with her dear ones she must part;
To seek their fortunes forth they fare,
And still the old and lonely heart
Blesses, and waits with courage there.

With careful savings flax she bought
And stinted sleep her flax to spin —
Fine yarn her thrifty hands have wrought,
And to the weaver carried in,
He wove a web of linen fair;
She brought the needle and the shears,
And her own fingers sewed with care
The last strait garment woman wears.

Last labor of a life complete,
She shrines it in a chosen place;
Strange treasure is a winding-sheet
To house as in a jewel-case!
On Sundays 'tis her first array,
It prints God's word within her breast,
Thus she forestalls her burial day,
When in its folds she lies at rest.

May I, when eventide draws on,
Like this poor woman, see fulfilled
Th' allotted task, the battle won,
Within the lines my God hath willed!
When life's mixed cup is drained at last,
Like hers, my memories pious be,
That I may look, when time has passed,
As kindly on my shroud as she.

Temple Bar.

C. B.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
JONATHAN SWIFT.

IN the controversy which Swift's life and character have provoked, it has been extremely difficult hitherto to arrive at any quite satisfactory conclusion. Biographical criticism, like Biblical, is a progressive science. The critical method, which we have brought to comparative perfection, was almost unknown to our forefathers. Johnson's "Lives of the English Poets" is one of the best books of the time, for his arbitrary dogmatism was controlled and informed by an admirable common sense; but even Johnson often misleads. We do not speak of his criticism of poetry, for the canon of taste has changed since his day — as it may change again; but the genuine spirit of inquiry is conspicuous by its absence. Even the lives of the men who might almost be called contemporary are treated as if the gossip of the club and the tittle-tattle of the coffee-house were the only available sources of information. Thus, until Walter Scott's memoirs were published, the real Swift was almost unknown. The growth of the Swift legend was indeed unusually rapid; and if an exacter criticism had not been brought to bear upon it in time, there is no saying to what proportions it might not have attained. The great Dean of St. Patrick's was becoming a grotesque and gigantic shadow. Scott was not a critic in the modern sense of the word; but his judgment, upon the whole, was sound and just, and his large humanity enabled him to read into the story much that a stricter scrutiny has since approved. The creative sympathy of genius is seldom at fault; for it works in obedience to the larger laws which govern human conduct, and if its methods are sometimes unscientific, its conclusions are generally reliable.

Scott has been followed by diligent students, and the researches of Mr. Mason, Mr. Forster, and Mr. Henry Craik may be considered exhaustive. All the documents that have any real bearing upon the controversy have been made accessible; and Mr. Craik's masterly life, in particular, leaves little to be desired.* Much

new matter has been recovered; much that was irrelevant has been set aside; and we think that a portrait, credible and consistent in its main lines, may now be constructed. After all deductions have been made, Jonathan Swift remains a great and imposing personality — as unique in that century as Benjamin Disraeli has been in ours.

The dean himself is to some extent responsible for the gross caricature which has been commonly accepted as a faithful portrait by his countrymen. The intense force of his genius gave a vital energy to the merest trifles. His casual sayings have branded themselves upon the language. *Only a woman's hair — die like a poisoned rat in a hole — I am what I am — ubi sava indignatio cor ulterius lacerare nequit*, — these letters of fire may be read through the darkness which has engulfed so much. But a true and complete estimate of a man's disposition and temper cannot be constructed out of scattered and isolated phrases. We must take these for what they are worth, — compare them, weigh them, find out their proper place and relative value in the narrative. The subtler lights and shades of character are necessarily missed in a sketch which busies itself exclusively with the occasional outburst — however vivid and impressive — of passion or remorse. Mr. Thackeray seldom hurts our sense of the becoming; but his slight and unconscientious treatment of one of the greatest satirists of the world is, it must be sorrowfully admitted, a well-nigh unpardonable offence.

The leading events of Swift's life fall naturally into four main divisions: 1st, His school and college life; 2d, His residence with Sir William Temple; 3d, His London career, with its social, literary, and political triumphs; 4th, His Irish banishment. He was born in 1667; he died in 1745: so that his life may be said the dean's biography before his death; but the materials which he had accumulated, as well as those in the possession of Mr. John Murray and others, have been put at Mr. Craik's disposal, and his elaborate "Life of Swift" (London — John Murray: 1882) must for the future be regarded as the standard work on the subject. Mr. Leslie Stephen's "Swift," published last year, is an acute though somewhat unsympathetic study, in which Swift's great qualities are rather minimized.

* Mr. Forster had only completed the first volume of

to cover nearly the whole period between the Restoration of Charles II. and the last Jacobite rebellion.

Oliver Cromwell had been only a few years in his grave when Jonathan Swift was born. Swift was an Irishman, in so far as the place of birth determines nationality; but except for the accident that he was born in Dublin, he was, by extraction and temperament, an Englishman. He came of a good Hereford stock, and he was proud of his ancestry. "My birth, although from a family not undistinguished in its time, is many degrees inferior to yours," he says to Bolingbroke — an admission which he might safely make, for St. John had a strain of Tudor blood in his veins. The dean's grandfather had been vicar of Goodrich, and had been distinguished during the Civil War for the heartiness and obstinacy of his loyalty. But loyalty was a losing game in England at the time. So it came about that several of the vicar's sons were forced to cross the Irish Channel, and try their luck in the Irish capital. The eldest, Godwin, through his connection with the Ormond family, was fairly successful; but the younger brother, Jonathan, when he married Abigail Erick, had still his fortune to make. He died a year or two afterwards, leaving his widow well-nigh penniless. So that when Jonathan the second made his appearance in this bad world on the last day of November, 1667, the outlook was by no means bright.

The widow contrived, however, to struggle on hopefully, and indeed remained to the end a bright, keen, thrifty, uncomplaining, capable sort of woman, much regarded by her son. In course of time she was able to get away from Dublin to her native country, where the Ericks had been known more or less since the days of that Eadric the forerunner from whom they claimed descent, and settled herself in Leicester, where she seems to have been well esteemed, and to have led the easy, blameless, unexciting life of a provincial town for many years. Her son had become famous before she died; but he was always loyal and affectionate to the cheery old lady, though their relations perhaps were never so intimate and endear-

ing as those which united his mother to Pope, —

Whose filial piety excells
Whatever Grecian story tells.

But he frequently went to see her, — walking the whole way, as was his habit; and on her death he recorded his sorrow in words so direct and simple that they cling to the memory: "*I have now lost my barrier between me and death. God grant I may live to be as well prepared for it as I confidently believe her to have been. If the way to heaven be through piety, truth, justice, and charity, she is there.*"

Swift was thus cast upon the charity of his friends from his earliest infancy. When barely a year old, indeed, he was secretly taken to Whitehaven by his nurse, who belonged to that part of the country, and who could not bring herself to part from her charge. The little fellow appears to have thriven in that homely companionship. He remained with her for three years; and before he was brought back to Ireland, he could read, he tells us, any chapter of the Bible. Soon after his return to Dublin he was sent by his uncle Godwin to the grammar school at Kilkenny — the famous academy where Swift and Congreve and Berkeley received their early training. From Kilkenny the lad went to Trinity College, — but his university career was undistinguished: he failed to accommodate himself to the traditional course of study, and it was with some difficulty that he obtained his degree. The sense of dependence pressed heavily upon him; he was moody and ill at ease — at war with the world, which had treated him scurvily, as he thought; and more than once he threatened to break into open revolt.

The Celtic rebellion of 1688 drove him, with a host of English fugitives, across the Channel — not unwillingly, we may believe. He joined his mother at Leicester; but before the close of 1689, he had obtained a post in the household of Sir William Temple. Sir William was living at Moor Park, near Farnham, in Surrey — a wild and romantic district even now, and which two centuries ago was a nat-

ural wilderness of heath and furze. In the centre of this wilderness Sir William had created a sort of Dutch paradise, — had planted his tulips, had dug his canals, and filled his fish-pond. The somewhat ponderous affability of the retired diplomatist was looked upon as rather old-fashioned, even by his contemporaries; and it is not difficult to believe that the relations between him and the raw and inexperienced Irish secretary must have been, at first at least, a trifle strained and difficult. But we are rather inclined to think that the residence with Temple was not the least happy period of Swift's life. He was in his early manhood; he spent much of his time in the open air; he had a plentiful store of books to fall back upon during rainy weather; the first promptings of genius and ambition were making themselves felt; he saw on occasion the great men who were moving the world; and after some inevitable misunderstandings he became indispensable to Temple, who "often trusted him," as he says, "with affairs of great importance." Then there was little Esther Johnson, — the delicate pupil who had already found a soft place in her master's heart, and whose childish prattle has been immortalized in words that are as fresh and sweet to-day as the day they were written. If it is true that "A Tale of a Tub" as well as "The Battle of the Books" was composed at Moor Park, the stories of his vulgar servitude and wearing misery are finally disposed of. The glow, the animation, the brightness of the narrative, are characteristic of a period of fine and true happiness — the happiness of the creative intellect in its earliest and least mechanical exercise.

When Swift left Moor Park in 1699, his education was complete. He was fitted by nature to play a great part in great affairs; and besides his unique natural gifts, he was now in every sense a man of culture and accomplishment. The discipline at Moor Park had been altogether salutary; and we have no reason to suppose that he felt himself degraded by the position which he had occupied and the duties he had discharged. A bitter and dreary childhood had been succeeded by years of dependence and priva-

tion; but at Moor Park, for the first time, he entered a secure haven, where, released from the stress of the storm, he had leisure to look about him, and to prepare himself for action.

It was not for some years after Temple's death that Swift became a noticeable figure in the metropolis. He was mostly in Ireland. He had become a clergyman before he finally left Moor Park; and he now held one or two inconsiderable livings in the Irish Church. The congregations were small; the duties were light; and he had a good deal of spare time on his hands. All his life he was a great walker (Mr. Leslie Stephen, himself an eminent mountaineer, is ready to fraternize with this possible member of the Alpine Club) — the sound mind in the sound body being with Swift largely dependent upon constant and even violent exercise. At this period — indeed during his whole career, but more especially at this time — these long, solitary rambles are a noticeable feature in Swift's life. He walks from London to Leicester, from Leicester to Holyhead, from Dublin to Laracor, — sleeping at roadside taverns, hobnobbing with wandering tinkers and incurious rustics, watching the men at their work, the women at their cottage doors. He had a great liking for this kind of life, and he loved the country after a fashion of his own: he recalls through the smoke of London the willows of Laracor, and when he is too moody in spirit to consort with his fellow-mortals, he goes down to the vicarage and shuts himself up in his garden.

It was in London, however, that his true life was passed. There the great game was being played in which he longed to join. He soon acquired celebrity — celebrity that in one sense cost him dear. From the day that "A Tale of a Tub" was published, he was a famous man. But it was a fame that rather scandalized Queen Anne and the orthodox school of Churchmen; and Swift could never get himself made a bishop, — a dignity which he mainly coveted, it is probable, because it implied secular and political as well as spiritual lordship. There is no doubt that Swift was a sincere be-

liever in what he held to be the main truths of Christianity; * but his ridicule was terribly keen, and the mere trappings of religion fared ill at his hands. There is no saying now how far this destructive logic might have been carried; there seems indeed to be a general consent among experts that it would have spared little. For our own part, we are not prepared to admit that the corruptions of religion — superstition and fanaticism — cannot be assailed except by the sceptic or the unbeliever. Swift did not attack the Church of England; but *that*, it is said, was only an accident. "Martin is not ridiculed; but with the attacks on Peter and John before us, it is impossible not to see that the same sort of things might be said of him as are said of them, and with the same sort of justice. What a chapter Swift might have written on the way in which Martin made his fortune by bribing the lawyers to divorce the squire when he wanted to marry his wife's maid; how he might have revelled in description of the skill with which Martin forged a new will in thirty-nine clauses, and tried to trip up Peter, and actually did crop Jack's ears, because they each preferred their own forgery to his!" Well, but suppose Swift had said all this, — would he have said anything more than Pusey, Keble, and a crowd of Church of England dignitaries have been saying now for many years past, without any suspicion of irreligion, or scepticism, or even of dangerous logical insight? In short, the substance of religion is independent of its accidents, which are often mean and grotesque; and the mean and the grotesque, in whatever shape, are fit subjects for satire — which in the hands of a Cervantes, a Rabelais, an Erasmus, or a Swift, may undoubtedly become the most effective of all weapons in the cause of truth and common sense. "A Tale of a Tub," Sir Walter Scott remarked very truly, "succeeded in rendering the High Church party most important services; for what is so important to a party in Britain as to gain the laughers to their side?" Mr. Leslie Stephen, with unlooked-for and unaccustomed timidity, replies, "The condition of having the laughers on your side is to be on the side of the laughers. Advocates of any seri-

ous cause feel that there is danger in accepting such an alliance." But Erasmus, who contrived to get the laughers on his side, had nearly as much to do with the reformation of ecclesiastical abuses in the sixteenth century as Luther or Calvin had. Swift's ridicule may have had a wider sweep, and may have involved even graver issues; but we do not see that it was *destructive* — that is, inimical to and inconsistent with a rational conception of Christianity — in the sense at least that David Hume's was destructive.

Addison's "Travels" were published in 1705, and he sent a copy to Swift with these words written upon the fly-leaf: "To Dr. Jonathan Swift, The most Agreeable Companion, the Truest Friend, and the Greatest Genius of his Age, This Book is presented by his most Humble Servant, the Author." So that even this early Swift's literary pre-eminence must have been freely recognized — at least among the Whigs, of whom Addison was the mouthpiece. Swift at this time was held to be a Whig; but in truth he cared little for party. He had, indeed, a passionate and deeply-rooted love of liberty, —

Better we all were in our graves,
Than live in slavery to slaves, —

but the right divine of the oligarchy to govern England was a claim that could not evoke much enthusiasm. The principles for which Hampden died on the field and Sidney on the scaffold were getting somewhat threadbare; and Swift was too clear-sighted to be in favor of popular rule. "The people is a lying sort of beast, and I think in Leicester above all other parts that ever I was in." At Moor Park, however, he had been under the roof of a statesman who was closely identified with the Revolution Settlement. The king himself had been a not unfrequent visitor; and it was natural that Swift, when he went out into the world, should take with him the politics of his patron. But they always sat loosely upon him. He did not love to see personal resentment mix with public affairs. So he said at a later period of life; and his earliest pamphlet was an earnest and spirited protest against the bitterness of faction. It recommended him to the Whig chiefs, who were then in the minority, and who were ready to welcome an ally who could prove from classical antiquity that their impeachment was a blunder. But when the victories of Marlborough had restored them to office, it

* The prayers composed by Swift for Mrs. Esther Johnson on her deathbed are very interesting, in this connection, and should be read attentively. They seem to us to show, along with much else, that whatever speculative difficulties he may have experienced, he had accepted Christianity, as a rule of life and faith, with sincere and even intense conviction.

cannot be said that Somers and Halifax exerted themselves very strenuously in behalf of their *protégé*. So late as the spring of 1709 he was able to tell the latter, that the copy of the "Poésies Chrétiennes" which he had begged of him on parting was the only favor he ever received from him or his party. There were obstacles in the way, no doubt; but it is difficult to suppose that if they had pressed his claims, they could not have made him an Irish bishop or an English dean. The rewards of letters in that age were splendid; and Swift's fame was rivalled only by Addison's. But the truth is, that there was from the first little sympathy between the oligarchy which governed England and this strong and trenchant intellect. Swift, moreover, was an ardent Churchman, who hated fanaticism and the fanatical sects; whereas the Whigs were lukewarm Churchmen, and rather addicted to Dissent. Macaulay says that when Harley and St. John succeeded in displacing Godolphin, Swift "ratted." The charge appears to us to be unfounded. Swift had shaken the dust of Whiggery off his feet before the prosecution of Sacheverell had been commenced. The alienation was even then virtually if not nominally complete. The leaders of the party had treated him badly, and were ready, he believed, to treat the Church badly if they dared. So that for some time before the Tories returned to office in 1710, he had been slowly but surely drifting into Toryism. Harley and St. John were resolved to have him at any price, — he was the only man they feared; but they would hardly have ventured to approach him if his Whiggery had been very pronounced. The unconventional habits of the new ministers were delightful to one who detested convention. They were weighted with great affairs; but he always found them, he declared, as easy and disengaged as schoolboys on a holiday. He was charmed by the easy familiarity of the lord treasurer; he was captivated by the adventurous genius of the secretary;* and affection and admiration completed

what the *sæva indignatio* may have begun. The ill-concealed antagonisms, the long-suppressed resentments, burst out with full force in "The Examiner." Nowhere have the narrow traditions of the Whigs been more trenchantly exposed. "They impose a hundred tests; they narrow the terms of communion; they pronounce nine parts in ten of the country heretics, and shut them out of the pale of their Church. These very men, who talk so much of a comprehension in religion among us, how come they to allow so little of it in politics, which is their sole religion?" "They come," he exclaims in another place, "they come with the spirits of shopkeepers to frame rules for the administration of kingdoms; as if they thought the whole art of government consisted in the importation of nutmegs and the curing of herrings. But God be thanked," he adds, "they and their schemes are vanished, and their place shall know them no more." This is not the language of a deserter who, from interested motives, has gone over to the enemy: there is, on the contrary, the energy of entire conviction.

From 1710 to 1714 St. John and Harley were in office. These were Swift's golden years. He enjoyed the consciousness of power; and now he had the substance of it, if not the show. He was by nature a ruler of men; and now his authority was acknowledged and undisputed. It must be confessed — as even Dr. Johnson is forced to confess — that during these years Swift formed the political opinions of the English nation.

He was still in his prime. When Harley became lord treasurer, Swift had not completed his forty-third year, and his bodily and mental vigor was unimpaired. The man who had hitherto led a life of penury and dependence, had found himself of a sudden in possession of a most wonderful weapon — the sword of sharpness or the coat of darkness of the fairy-tale — which made him a match for the greatest and the strongest. It was an intoxicating position; but upon the whole, he bore himself not ignobly. That there was always a certain masterfulness about him need not be doubted; but the roughness of his manner and the brusqueness of his humor have certainly been exaggerated. The reports come to us from those who saw him in later and evil days, when he was suffering from bodily pain and the irritability of incipient madness. But in 1710 the "imperious and moody exile" was the most delightful company

* "I think Mr. St. John the greatest young man I ever knew: wit, capacity, beauty, quickness of apprehension, good learning, and an excellent taste; the best orator in the House of Commons, admirable conversation, good nature, and good manners; generous, and a despiser of money." — *Swift to Stella*. We do not enter here into the merits of the political measures advocated by Swift, and carried out by St. John and Harley; but we cannot say that Mr. Craik does anything like justice to St. John, whose immense capacity has extorted the admiration of his bitterest critics, — whose foreign policy was approved by Macaulay, and whose "free and noble style" was praised by Jeffrey.

in the world. The "conjured spirit" had been exorcised by the spell of congenial work, and its owner was bright, ardent, and unwearied in the pursuit of business and pleasure. Swift had unquestionably that personal charm which is so potent in public life. Men were drawn to him as by a magnet; for women — for more than one woman at least — he had an irresistible attraction. He was not tall; but his figure was certainly not "ungainly," and his face was at once powerful and refined. There was a delicate curve of scorn about the lips; though he was never known to laugh, his eyes were bright with mirth and mockery, — "azure as the heavens," said Pope, "and with a charming archness in them." Poor Vanessa found that there was something awful in them besides; but that was later. Altogether he must have been, so far as we can figure him now, a very noticeable man, — the blue eyes shining archly under the black and bushy eyebrows, the massive forehead, the dimpled chin, the aquiline nose, the easy and confident address, the flow of ready mother-wit, the force of a most trenchant logic; except St. John, there was probably no man in England at the time who, taken all round, was quite a match for the famous Irish vicar.

The death of Queen Anne was nearly as mortal a blow to Swift as to St. John. It meant banishment for both. Yet the great qualities of the men were accentuated by evil fortune. "What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!" St. John exclaimed on the day he fell; and a week later he wrote to Swift, "Adieu; love me, and love me better, because after a greater blow than most men ever felt I keep up my spirit — am neither dejected at what is past, nor apprehensive at what is to come. *Mea virtute me involvo.*" "Swift," said Arbuthnot, "keeps up his noble spirit; and though like a man knocked down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries."

Swift returned to Ireland in 1714. He had been appointed to the Deanery of St. Patrick's by his Tory friends; and he applied himself, on his return, with zeal and assiduity to the duties of his charge. But though he bore himself stoutly, he was in truth a soured and disappointed man. The company of great friends had been scattered. He was remote from St. John, Pope, and Gay. He detested Ireland, — "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*," he had said to Oxford not long before. But

the irony of fate had been too strong for him, and the rest of his life was to be spent among a people whom he despised. He came back under a cloud of unpopularity. He was mobbed more than once in the streets of Dublin. But nature had made him a ruler of men — in Ireland as elsewhere. Soon he rose to be its foremost citizen. The English Whigs had treated Ireland with gross injustice; and the wrongs of Ireland were a ready theme for the patriot and the satirist. The Irish people were not ungrateful. "Come over to us," he had once written in his grand way to Addison, "and we will raise an army, and make you king of Ireland." He himself for many years was its virtual ruler. "When they ask me," said the accomplished Carteret, who had been lord lieutenant, "how I governed Ireland, I say that I pleased Dr. Swift." Walpole would have been glad more than once to punish the audacious Churchman, but the risk was too great. During the prosecution of the printer of the "Drapier Letters," the popular determination found appropriate expression in a well-known passage of Holy Writ: "Shall JONATHAN die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued JONATHAN, that he died not." And when, at a later period, exasperated by a peculiarly bitter taunt, the minister threatened to arrest the dean, he was dissuaded by prudent friends. The messengers of the law would require to be protected by the military — could he spare ten thousand men for the purpose? "Had I held up my little finger," Swift said to Walpole's ally, the primate Boulter, who had been expostulating with him on his violence — "had I held up my little finger, they would have torn you to pieces." * Bonfires blazed on his birthday. In every town of Ireland that he visited, he was received "as a sovereign prince." When he went from Dublin to the provinces, it was like a royal progress. On his return in 1727 from the last visit he paid to England, the vessel in which he crossed the Channel was signalled in Dublin Bay. "The corporation met the ship in wheries, the quays were decked with bunting, the bells were rung, and the city received in gala fashion her most beloved citizen."

* On another occasion, a great crowd having assembled to witness an eclipse of the sun, Swift sent round the bell-man to intimate that the eclipse had been postponed by the dean's orders, and the crowd forthwith dispersed.

But all was unavailing. The gloomy shadows gathered more closely round him. Vanessa was dead; Stella was dead; one by one the great friends had dropped away. He was tortured by a profound misanthropy — the misanthropy of the man who sees too clearly and feels too keenly. For many years before his death he read on his birthday that chapter of Job in which the patriarch curses the day on which it was said in his father's house that a man child was born. "Gulliver" is one of the great books of the world; but the hopeless rage against the race of mortals in the closing chapters is almost too terrible. For many years Swift was one of the most wretched of men. The gloom never lightened — the clouds never broke. It must have been almost a relief when total darkness came — if such it was. But that is the worst of madness — we cannot tell if the unconsciousness, the oblivion, is absolute. Behind the veil the tortured spirit may prey upon itself. He had asked to be taken away from the evil to come; but his prayer was not granted. He would have rejoiced exceedingly to find the grave; but he was forced to drink the cup to the dregs. *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.** During the last four years of his life this famous wit, this prodigious intellect, was utterly prostrated. Only a broken sentence came at long intervals from his lips. "Go, go!" "Poor old man!" "I am what I am." The picture is darker than any he has drawn, — it is a more bitter commentary on the irony of human life than anything that Gulliver witnessed in all his travels. The end came on the 19th of October, 1745.

Such is a brief sketch of the chief incidents of Swift's life, — brief, but sufficient perhaps to enable us to follow with sympathy and understanding some of the questions on which controversy has arisen. "Without sympathy," as Mr. Craik has well said, "few passages of Swift's life are fairly to be judged." There are a good many side issues that come up incidentally for judgment; but the main controversy, out of which the others emerge, is concerned with the relations which the dean maintained with Stella and Vanessa.

If we examine with any care the indictment that has been prepared by Jeffrey, Macaulay, Thackeray, and others, we find that the charges against Swift may be

stated somewhat thus: he was parsimonious and avaricious, a self-seeker and a cynic, brutal to the weak and abject to the strong, a factious Churchman, a faithless politician, coarse in language and overbearing in manner. Some of these allegations have been disposed of by what has been already said: that there was an essential consistency, for instance, in his political opinions, that he did not "rat" in any base or vulgar sense, seems to us to be incontestable; and it will be found, we think, that most of the other charges rest on an equally slender basis of fact, on equally palpable misconstructions. Indeed, the more we examine the dean's life, the more obvious does it become that his vices leant to virtue's side, and that the greatness of his nature asserted itself strongly and unequivocally in his very weaknesses.

One initial difficulty there is — Swift had a habit of putting his worst foot foremost. He detested hypocritical pretence of every kind; and in speaking of himself he often went to the other extreme. A subtle vein of self-mockery runs through his letters, which incapacity and dulness may easily misconstrue. Pope understood it; Bolingbroke understood it; but the solemn badinage of his own actions and motives, in which he liked to indulge, when taken as a serious element by serious biographers, has been apt to lead them astray. Swift, in short, was a singularly reticent man, who spoke as little as possible about his deeper convictions, and who, when taxed with amiability, or kind-heartedness, or generosity, or piety, preferred to reply with an ambiguous jest.

The dean's alleged meanness in money matters is easily explained. The iron had entered into his soul. He had known at school and college what penury meant; and he deliberately resolved that by no act of his own would he again expose himself to the miseries of dependence. But he was not avaricious, — from a very early period he gave away one-tenth of his narrow income in charity. He saved, as some one has said, not that he might be rich, but that he might be liberal. Such thrift cannot be condemned; on the contrary, it is virtue of a high order — the virtue which the strenuous Roman extolled. *Magnum vectigal est parsimonia.* He went out of his way to help others. His temper was naturally generous. It may be said, quite truly, that he valued power mainly because it enabled him to push the fortunes of his friends. He excused himself indeed in his characteristic

* Job. iii. 25.

fashion. To help his friends was to him so much of a pleasure, that it could not be a virtue.

The charge that he was ready to push his own fortunes by any means however base, seems to us to be capable of even more emphatic refutation. Thackeray says that Swift was abject to a lord. The truth is, that no man was ever more independent. The moment that Harley hurt his sense of self-respect by an injudicious gift, he broke with him. The treasurer had taken an unpardonable liberty, and must apologize. "If we let these great ministers pretend too much, there will be no governing them," he wrote to Stella. He recognized true greatness cordially wherever he found it, and real kindness subdued him at once. But the mere trappings of greatness—the stars and garters and ribbons—had no effect upon his imagination:—

Where titles give no right or power,
And peerage is a withered flower.

He loved Oxford; he loved Bolingbroke; but he did not love them better than he loved Pope and Gay and Arbuthnot. He left Somers and Halifax when he thought they were playing the Church false; but the Tory chiefs who had been kind to him, though one was in exile and the other in the Tower, were never mentioned by him without emotion. He offered to share Oxford's imprisonment; and nothing would induce him to bow the knee to Walpole. He was anxious, indeed, to obtain promotion; he would have been well pleased if his friends had made him a bishop; but the anxiety was quite natural. If there had been any show of neglect, if the men for whom he had fought so gallantly had affected to underrate his services and to overlook his claims, his self-respect would have been wounded. The feeling was precisely similar to that of the soldier who fails to receive the ribbon or the medal which he has earned. But Swift was not *greedy* either of riches or of fame,—so long as he was able to keep the wolf from the door, the most modest competence was all that he asked. He had none of the irritable vanity of the author; all his works were published anonymously; and he manifested a curious indifference to that posthumous reputation—"the echo of a hollow vault"—which is so eagerly and vainly prized by aspiring mortals. Nor did he give a thought to the money value of his work—Pope, Mrs. Barber, the booksellers, might have it, and welcome. What he

really valued was the excitement of the campaign: in the ardor of the fight he sought and found compensation. "A person of great honor in Ireland used to tell me that my mind was like a conjured spirit, that would do mischief if I would not give it employment." And he says elsewhere, "I myself was never very miserable while my thoughts were in a ferment, for I imagine a dead calm is the troublesomest part of our voyage through the world." These and similar avowals are very characteristic. The cool poetic woodland was not for this man. He could not go and lie down on the grass, and listen to the birds, and be happy like his innocent rustics. One may pity him, but censure surely is stupidly unjust. Not only were his faculties in finest working order at the supreme and critical juncture, when the fortune of battle was poised in the balance, but the noise of the guns and the shouts of the combatants drove away the evil spirit which haunted him. Absorbed in the great game, he forgot himself and the misery which at times was well-nigh intolerable. For all his life a dark shadow hung over him, and only when drinking "delight of battle with his peers" might he escape into the sunshine. It must never be forgotten that Swift suffered not merely from almost constant bodily discomfort, but from those dismal forebodings of mental decay which are even more trying than the reality.

We need not wonder that such a man should have been cynical. The profound melancholy of his later years was unrelieved by any break of light; but even in his gayest time the gloom must have been often excessive. The scorn of fools,—

Hated by fools and fools to hate,
Be that my motto and my fate,—

is the burden of his earliest as of his latest poetry.

My hate, whose lash just heaven has long decreed
Shall on a day make sin and folly bleed!

Alas! it hurt himself as much as, or even more than, the fools and sinners; so that at the end, when his hand had lost its cunning, as he thought, and the curtain was about to drop, he entreated Pope to give them one more lash at his request. "Life is not a farce," he adds, "it is a ridiculous tragedy, which is the worst kind of composition;" and then (it belongs to the same period, and certainly shows no failure of power) he proceeds to

draw that tremendous picture of the day of judgment, which, if he had left nothing more, would alone prove to us that Swift's intense satirical imagination was of the highest order:—

While each pale sinner hung his head,
Jove, nodding, shook the heavens and said,—
"Offending race of human kind,
By reason, nature, learning, blind,
You who through frailty step'd aside,
And you who never fell—through pride;
You who in different sects were sham'd,
And come to see each other damn'd
(So some folks told you, but they knew
No more of Jove's designs than you),
The world's mad business now is o'er,
And I resent these pranks no more.
I to such blockheads set my wit!
I damn such fools!—Go, go, you're *bit*."

Strange as it may appear to some, the man who wrote these terrible lines was a man whose heart was intensely sensitive, whose affections were morbidly acute, who could not bear to see his friends in pain. His cynicism melted into pity at a word. "I hate life," he exclaims, when he hears that Lady Ashburnham is dead, "I hate life, when I think it exposed to such accidents; and to see so many wretches burdening the earth, when such as her die, makes me think God did never intend life to be a blessing." Little Harrison, in whom he had interested himself, is taken dangerously ill, and he has not the courage to knock at the "poor lad's" door to inquire. "I told Parnell I was afraid to knock at the door; my mind misgave me. I knocked, and his man in tears told me his master was dead an hour before. Think what grief this is to me! I did not dine with Lord Treasurer, or anywhere else, but got a bit of meat towards evening." When the letter came telling him that Gay was dead, he knew by instinct—"an impulse forboding some misfortune"—what it contained, and could not open it for days. And when Stella was ill, his anguish was greater than he could bear. "What am I to do in this world? I am able to hold up my sorry head no longer."

And yet at times—it cannot be denied—Swift could be simply brutal. When his passion was roused he was merciless. He struck out like a blind man—in a sort of frantic rage. He raved—he stormed—he lost self-control—he was taken possession of by his devil. The demoniac element was at times strong in Swift: somewhere or other in that mighty mind there was a congenital flaw which no medicine could heal. The lamentable

coarseness of much that he wrote is likewise symptomatic of disease. But, as we have said, it is unfair to judge him by the incidents of his closing years. The profound misanthropy grew upon him. At first it was clearness of vision,—at last it was bitterness of soul. But it did not overpower him till he had passed middle life, till his ambition had been foiled, till he had been driven into exile, till Stella was dead, till he was tortured by almost constant pain, till the shadows of a yet deeper darkness were closing round him.

The story of Swift's relations with Stella and Vanessa is one of those somewhat mysterious episodes in literary history which continue to baffle criticism. The undisputed facts are briefly these: that Swift became acquainted with Esther Johnson (Stella) at Sir William Temple's; that he directed the girl's studies; that a romantic friendship sprang up between them; that soon after Sir William's death she went, on Swift's advice, to reside in Ireland, where she had a small estate, and where living was relatively cheaper than in England; that though they always lived apart, the early attachment became closer and more intimate; that about 1708 he was introduced to the Vanhomrigh family in London: that Hester Vanhomrigh (Vanessa) fell violently in love with him; that she followed him to Ireland; that she died in 1723, soon after a passionate scene with the man she loved; and that Stella died in 1728, and was buried in the cathedral—close to the grave where the dean was afterwards laid. These are the bare facts, which have been very variously construed by critics, and of which we now proceed to offer the explanation which appears to fit them most nearly. But, in doing so, it is necessary to dismiss at the outset the common assumption that relations of close friendship between a man and woman are abnormal and unaccountable unless they end in marriage. What we assert is, that the devotion of Swift to Esther Johnson was the devotion of friendship, not of love; and that from this point of view only does the riddle admit of even approximate solution.

Swift, as we have seen, had resolved early in life that no temptation would induce him to barter his independence. With the object of securing a modest competence, he practised the most rigid economy. He had no fortune of his own, and his beggarly Irish livings afforded him at most a bare subsistence. A heavy burden of debt—more than a thousand

pounds — attached to the deanery on his appointment. Thus he was growing old before, with the views which he entertained, he was in a position to marry. And he was not a man to whom "love in a cottage" could have offered any attractions. "He is covetous as hell, and ambitious as the prince of it," he said of Marlborough. Swift was not mercenary as the duke was mercenary; but the last infirmity of noble minds was probably his ruling passion. The oracle of a country town, tied to a dull and exacting wife, he would have fretted himself to death in a year. He needed the pressure of action to prevent him from growing gloomy and morose. Nor was mere irritability, or even the *sæva indignatio*, the worst that he had to apprehend. His health was indifferent; he suffered much from deafness and giddiness, — caused, it is asserted, by some early imprudence, a surfeit of ripe fruit or the like, but more or less closely connected, it is probable, with the mental disease which seems to have run in the family — his uncle Godwin having died in a madhouse. "I shall be like that tree," he is reported to have said many years before his own death, pointing to an elm whose upper branches had been withered by lightning; "I shall die at the top." Even in early manhood he had confessed that he was of a "cold temper;" and he spoke of love — the absurd passion of play-books and romances — only to ridicule it. His opinion of marriage, in so far as he himself was interested, may be gathered from a letter written when he was five-and-twenty: "The very ordinary observations I made without going half a mile from the university, have taught me experience enough not to think of marriage till I settle my fortune in the world, which I am sure will not be in some years; and even then I am so hard to please myself, that *I suppose I shall put it off to the next world.*" This may have been said partly in jest; but a man so situated, and with such antecedents, may very reasonably have asked himself whether he was entitled to marry. Friendship, on the other hand, was a noble emotion; he never wearied of singing its praise. And he acted up to his persuasion: if Swift was a bitter foe, he was at least a constant and magnanimous friend.

Yet, by some curious perversity, the man to whom love was a by-word was forced to sound the deeps and to explore the mysteries of passion.

One of Swift's resolutions, recorded in

the curious paper of 1699, "When I come to be old," was, "not to be fond of children, or let them come near me hardly." Esther Johnson, the only child who up to that time had come very close to him, was then just leaving her childhood behind her — she was seventeen years old. The delicate girl had matured or was maturing into a bright and charming woman. It is admitted on all hands that Stella was worthy of Swift's — indeed of any man's — regard. She had great good sense; her conversation was keen and sprightly; and though latterly inclining to stoutness, her figure was then extremely fine. The face was somewhat pale; but the pallor served to heighten the effect of her brilliantly dark eyes and unusually black hair. "Hair of a raven black," says Mrs. Delaney; "Her hair was blacker than a raven," says Swift. In society she was much esteemed; she had a touch of Addison's courteous and caressing manner, though later on, among her Irish friends, she rose to be a sort of queen, and became possibly a little peremptory and dictatorial. But she seems at all times (in spite of a brief fit of jealous passion now and again) to have been a true, honest, sound-hearted, modest woman. She herself attributes her superiority to the common foibles of her sex to Swift's early influence; and in one of the latest birthday poems he sent her, he does ample justice to her candor, her generosity, and her courage: —

Your generous boldness to defend
An innocent and absent friend;
That courage which can make you just
To merit humbled in the dust;
The detestation you express
For vice in all its glittering dress;
That patience under tort'ring pain,
Where stubborn Stoics would complain:
Must these like empty shadows pass,
Or forms reflected from a glass?

There can be no doubt that for Stella, Swift had a great compassion, a true tenderness. The innocent child had been, as it were, thrown upon his care; she grew up to girlhood at his side; he was her guardian, her schoolmaster, her nearest friend. But so far as he was concerned, there never was any thought of love between them, — a schoolmaster might address a favorite pupil, a father a beloved child, in precisely the same language that Swift addressed to Stella. It was friendship — friendship of the closest and most endearing character, but friendship only — that united them. His tone

throughout, from first to last, was perfectly consistent : —

Thou, Stella, wert no longer young,
When first for thee my harp I strung,
Without one word of Cupid's darts,
Of killing eyes or bleeding hearts;
With friendship and esteem possest,
I ne'er admitted love a guest.*

This was the language that he held to Tisdale in 1704, soon after Esther had gone to Ireland; this was the language he held to Stopford when she was dying. If he had ever thought of marriage, he would have chosen Stella: but "his fortunes and his humor" had put matrimony out of the question; and his experience had been, that violent friendship was as much engaging and more lasting than violent love. Every care was taken to make the nature of the relation clear to the world; and in point of fact, no scandal came of it.

The "little language" in which so many of the letters and journals are written, seems to us to point to the same conclusion. Swift dwells upon Esther's charming babyhood with the sweetness and tenderness of parental reminiscence. That innocent babble — the babble of our children before they have quite mastered the difficulties of speech — had a perennial charm for him, as, through him, it has for us. "I assure zu it um velly late now; but zis goes to-morrow. Nite, darling rogues." He has as many pet names for Stella as a fond father has for a pet daughter. She is Saucebox, and Sluttakins, and dear, roguish, impudent, pretty MD, and politic Madame Poppet with her two eggs a-penny. How lightly, how delicately touched! *That* is the gayer mood; the more sombre is hardly less striking. In his darkest hours, her pure devotion to him is like light from heaven. She is his better angel, — the saint in the little niche overhead who intercedes for him. "Much better. Thank God and MD's prayers." "Giddy fit and swimming in head. MD and God help me." Nothing can be more touching. Some critics maintain that Swift never wrote poetry. It would be truer, we think, to affirm that whenever he uses the poetical form to express (sometimes to hide) intense feeling, he writes better poetry than any of his contemporaries. When, for instance, he urges Stella, who had come from her own sick-bed to nurse him in his sickness, not to injure

her health, the lines seem to us to reach a very high altitude indeed : —

Best pattern of true friends, beware;
You pay too dearly for your care,
If, while your tenderness secures
My life, it must endanger yours;
For such a fool was never found
Who pulled a palace to the ground,
Only to have the ruins made
Materials for a house decayed.

How did Stella accept this lifelong friendship, this playful homage, this tender reverence? What did she think of it? It seems to us that a great deal of quite unnecessary pity has been wasted on Esther Johnson. It may be that Swift did not recognize the extent of the sacrifice he demanded; but in truth, was the sacrifice so hard? Is there any proof that Stella was an unwilling victim; or, indeed, a victim at all? She mixed freely in society; she occupied a quite assured position; she was the comfort and confidant of the greatest man of the age. Is there any reason whatever to hold that she was unhappy? On the contrary, did she not declare to the last that she had been amply repaid?

Long be the day that gave you birth
Sacred to friendship, wit, and mirth;
Late dying, may you cast a shred
Of your rich mantle o'er my head;
To bear with dignity my sorrow,
One day alone, then die to-morrow.

Vanessa (Hester Vanhomrigh) was a woman cast in quite a different mould. Her vehement and unruly nature had never been disciplined; and when her passion was roused, she was careless of her name. There can, we think, be little good doubt that Swift was for some time really interested in her. She was an apt and docile pupil; and if not strictly handsome, she appears to have possessed a certain power of fascination — the "strong toil of grace," which is often more potent than mere beauty. It cannot be said, indeed, that Swift was in love with Hester; but she certainly charmed his fancy and appealed successfully to his sympathies. Stella was absent in Dublin; and the dean was a man who enjoyed the society of women who were pretty and witty and accomplished, and who accepted with entire submission his despotic and whimsical decrees. Vanessa was such a woman; and he does not, for some time at least, appear to have appreciated the almost tropical passion and vehemence of her nature, dangerous and devastating as a thunderstorm in the tropics, — appears,

* Written in 1730 — three or four years after the alleged marriage.

on the contrary, to have been in utter ignorance of what was coming, till she threw herself into his arms. He had had no serious thought; but the acuteness of the crisis into which their intimacy had suddenly developed, alarmed and disquieted him. Here was a flood-tide of passion of which he had had no experience — fierce, uncontrollable, intolerant of prudential restraints. "Can't we touch these bubbles, then, but they break?" some one asks in one of Robert Browning's plays; and Swift regarded the situation with the same uneasiness and perplexity. He was sorely dismayed, utterly put about, when he discovered how matters stood. It is easy to say that he should have left her at once, and avoided any further intimacy. It is easy to say this; but all the same, the situation in any light was extremely embarrassing. He may possibly for the moment have been rather flattered by her preference, as most men would be by the attentions of a pretty and attractive girl; and he may have thought, upon the whole, that it was best to temporize. By gentle raillery, by sportive remonstrance, he would show her how foolish she had been in losing her heart to a man "who understood not what was love," and who, though caressed by ministers of state, was old enough to be her father. But poor Vanessa was far too much in earnest to accept his playful advice. She was peremptory and she was abject by turns. "Sometimes you strike me with that prodigious awe, I tremble with fear; at other times a charming compassion shows through your countenance, which revives my soul." He must marry her, or she would die. And she did die. It was a hard fate. Another man might have been free to woo her; but to Swift such a union was, of course, impossible. Stella stood between them, and behind Stella that gloomy phantom of mental and bodily disease which had haunted him all his life. He was not ungrateful to either of these women; but such a return would have been worse than ingratitude.

Mr. Craik is of opinion that there is enough direct evidence to show that Swift was married to Esther Johnson in 1716. We hold, on the contrary, not only that the direct evidence of marriage is insufficient, but that it can be established with reasonable certainty (in so far, at least, as a negative is capable of proof) that no marriage took place.

We have already described so fully the character of the relations between them, that it is only now necessary to say that

what may be called the circumstantial evidence, the evidence of facts and circumstances, is distinctly adverse. But in confirmation of what has been already advanced, we may here remark, that besides the letters and poems addressed to herself (where friendship to the exclusion of love is invariably insisted on), he wrote much about her. In these papers the same tone is preserved, — she is a dear friend, not a wife. One of them was composed, like Carlyle's remarkable account of his father, in very solemn circumstances, — was written mainly during the hours that elapsed between the day she died and the day she was buried. "This day, being Sunday Jan. 28, 1727-28, about eight o'clock at night a servant brought me a note with an account of the death of the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with." "This is the night of her funeral," he adds two days later, "which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine at night; and I am removed into another apartment that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bed-chamber." No record was ever penned in circumstances more calculated to make a deep impression on the mind, and to induce the writer to speak with the most perfect frankness, sincerity, and unreserve; but here, as elsewhere, it is the irreparable loss of her "friendship" that is deplored. Not a word of marriage. Then there is no proof that Stella at any time asserted that she was his wife, the stories of the meeting with Vanessa, and of the death-bed declaration, being manifest inventions. Mr. Craik fairly admits that the latter of these is incredible; yet the evidence which he discards in connection with the declaration is almost precisely identical with that which he accepts in connection with the marriage. Nor is there any evidence to show that they were held to be married persons during their lives, — they had both been dead and buried for years before the rumor of their union obtained publicity. There may be in some contemporary lampoon an allusion to the alleged ceremony; we have not met with it nor, so far as we know, has it been met with by any of the biographers. Nor can any plausible motive for the marriage be assigned. There was no scandal to silence; the relations between them, which had subsisted for nearly twenty years, appear to have been sufficiently understood. But assuming that there had been scandal, how was it

to be silenced by a ceremony, the secret of which, during life and after death, was to be jealously guarded? Was it performed to satisfy Stella? But there is no proof that she was dissatisfied; she had cheerfully acquiesced in, had loyally accepted the relation as it stood. It could not have been for the satisfaction of her conscience; her conscience was in no way involved: it was never asserted, even by bitterest partisans, that the connection was immoral. Can it be supposed that for some reason or other (to prevent, for instance, any risk of subsequent misconstruction) it was done at the dean's desire? But if the story is true that it was the dean himself who insisted that the secret should never be published, what good did he expect it to effect? how could it avail, either directly or indirectly, to avert possible misconstructions? If a ceremony did take place, we are thus entitled to maintain that it was an *utterly unreasonable and unaccountable act—opposed to all the probabilities of the case*. Still, if it were proved by (let us say) an entry in a register, the marriage "lines," a letter from Stella, a letter from Swift, a certificate under the bishop's hands—anything approaching either legal or moral proof—we might be bound to disregard the antecedent improbabilities. Nay, even if a friend like Dr. Delaney had said plainly that he had the information from Swift himself, then (subject to observation on the too frequent misunderstandings of verbal confidences) it might be reasonable to accept it. But the direct evidence does not amount even to this. It consists of a passage in Lord Orrery's "Remarks" (much that Lord Orrery said about Swift must be accepted with reserve), where, after stating in a loose, incidental way that Stella was Swift's concealed but undoubted wife, he goes on, "*If my informations are right*, she was married to Dr. Swift in the year 1716, by Dr. Ashe, then Bishop of Clogher." On this Dr. Delaney, in his "Observations," remarks, "Your lordship's account of the marriage is, *I am satisfied*, true." Mr. Monck Mason's contention that this is a statement of opinion or belief only, is vigorously combated by Mr. Craik. Mr. Craik argues that the words "I am satisfied" apply not to the fact of a marriage, which was "undoubted," but to the circumstances of the ceremony. Mr. Craik's argument does not appear to us to be successful. First, if the ceremony did not take place *then*, it did not take place at all. The belief in any ceremony rests exclu-

sively upon the allegation that a ceremony was performed in the garden of the deanery in 1716; and if that allegation is not somehow substantiated, the case for the marriage must break down. So that it is really of no consequence to which of Lord Orrery's statements Dr. Delaney's words apply. Second, the words "I am satisfied" are unequivocal, and clearly imply that the writer was led to his conclusion by the evidence submitted to him; that is to say, Dr. Delaney's was only inferential and circumstantial belief, not direct knowledge. He had not received his information from headquarters, from Swift or from Stella; he was putting this and that together, and drawing an inference; and as he nowhere asserts that he had recovered or was in possession of any really direct evidence, Mr. Mason's conclusion, that even in the case of so familiar an intimate as Dr. Delaney the marriage was matter of opinion or conjecture only, seems to be justified.

Lord Orrery's "Remarks" were published in 1752, seven years after Swift's death; and it was not till 1789 that the story received any further corroboration. In that year Mr. George Monck Berkeley asserted in his "Literary Relics" that "Swift and Stella were married by the Bishop of Clogher, who himself related the circumstances to Bishop Berkeley, by whose relict the story was communicated to me." This bit of evidence certainly comes to us in a very circuitous and round-about fashion. Mr. Berkeley was told by Bishop Berkeley's widow, who had it from her husband, who had it from Bishop Ashe. Any one familiar with the proceedings of courts of law knows that evidence of this kind is of no value whatever. The gossip is handed down from one to another, often in perfect good faith, yet he who builds upon it builds upon the sand. And when closely examined, it is seen that the narrative is in itself highly suspicious, and open to serious observation. The ceremony was celebrated in 1716; Berkeley was abroad at the time, and did not return till after Bishop Ashe's death, which took place in 1717. Mr. Craik insists that when it is stated that Bishop Ashe "*related* the circumstances to Bishop Berkeley," it is not implied that he did it "by word of mouth." But is there the least likelihood, from what we know of the bishop, that he would have been guilty of so grave an indiscretion? It cannot be doubted that he had been bound over to inviolable secrecy; and though such a secret might be incau-

tiously betrayed or accidentally ooze out during familiar talk, is it conceivable that a man of honor and prudence could have deliberately, and in cold blood, made it, within a few weeks or months, the subject of a letter to an absent friend?

This is really the whole evidence of the slightest relevancy that has been recovered,—the loose gossip of Sheridan (of whom it will be recollected Dr. Johnson said, "Why, sir, Sherry is dull, naturally dull; but it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we see him now. Such an excess of stupidity, sir, is not in nature") being very naturally pooh-poohed by the biographers in general, and even by Mr. Craik. On the other hand, all those who were closely connected with Swift and Stella in their latter years—Dr. Lyon, Mrs. Dingley, Mrs. Brent, Mrs. Ridgeway, and others—deny that any ceremony took place; and almost the last writing which Stella subscribed opens with the significant words, "I, *Esther Johnson*, of the city of Dublin, *spinster*." It is maintained, indeed, that these words are of no consequence, seeing that she had bound herself not to disclose that she was a married woman. Still there is this to be said, that *if* she was married, the introduction of the word "spinster" was a quite unnecessary falsehood, the testatrix being quite sufficiently described as "*Esther Johnson*, of the city of Dublin." And when we consider that this can have been only one (though the last) of a long succession of humiliating embarrassments, the question again suggests itself with irresistible force, Why should they have loaded their lives with such a burden of deceit? Where are we to look for the motive that will in any measure account for it? Upon the whole, it seems to us almost inevitable that some such story as Lord Orrery's (however unfounded) should have got abroad. The relations of Swift to Stella were certainly exceptional, and not easily intelligible to the outside world; yet Stella's character was irreproachable, and calumny itself did not venture to assail her. What more natural than that the surmise of a secret union should have been entertained by many, should have been whispered about among their friends even during Swift's life, and should after his death have gradually assumed substance and shape?

After all is said, a certain amount of mystery and ambiguity must attach to the connection, as to much else in the dean's life. He survived Stella for nearly twenty years; yet those who assert that a mar-

riage took place, search the records of all these years in vain for any avowal, however slight. "Only a woman's hair," scrawled on the envelope in which a tress of the raven-black hair was preserved, affords a slender cue to conjecture, and is as enigmatical as the rest. Only a woman's hair, only the remembrance of the irrevocable past, only the joy, the sorrow, the devotion of a lifetime, only that—nothing more.

Pudor et Justitiæ soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas.*

Whatever interpretation each of us may be disposed to give them, we shall all admit that there must have been something transcendent in the genius and the despair which could invest these four quite commonplace words with an immortality of passion.†

And this, the most vivid of the dean's many vivid sayings, leads us, in conclusion, to add a word or two on Swift's literary faculty. These, however, must be very brief; and were it not that a vigorous effort has been recently made to show that, judged by his writings, Swift was not a great, but "essentially a small, and in some respects a bad man," might at this time of day have been altogether dispensed with. For there is "finality" in literature, if not in politics. The writer who undertakes to demonstrate that Homer, and Virgil, and Dante, and Shakespeare, and Rabelais, and Swift were essentially small men, cannot be treated seriously. To say that he is airing a paradox is to put it very mildly; and indeed, the offence might properly be described in much sharper language. A scientific writer who in the year 1883 attacks the law of gravitation is guilty of a scientific impertinence which all scientific men whose time is of value are entitled to resent. Swift's position in letters is equally assured, and as little matter for argument.

* "Honor, truth, liberality, good-nature, and modesty were the virtues she chiefly possessed and most valued in her acquaintance. It was not safe nor prudent in her presence to offend in the least word against modesty. She was the most disinterested mortal I ever knew or heard of." (The character of Mrs. Johnson by Swift.)

† Since this article was in type, an acute writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* has arrived, by a somewhat similar course of reasoning, at a verdict of "Not proven." He is prevented from going a step further by attaching a certain amount of credit to what we have called Stella's death-bed declaration. That story appears to us, as to Mr. Craik, intrinsically incredible; but we need not discuss it here. The real issue, when divested of all irrelevances, comes to this,—There being no direct evidence of any weight on either side, which view is most natural, most explanatory, most easily reconciled with the undisputed facts, with the character of Swift on the one hand and of Stella on the other?

"A Tale of a Tub," "Gulliver's Travels," the argument against abolishing Christianity, the verses on poetry and on his own death, are among the imperishable possessions of the world. The entry has been duly recorded in the National Register, and cannot now be impeached. And "the clash of the country" is not in this case a mere vague general impression, but is instructed by the evidence of the most skilful experts. To take the most recent. Scott, Macaulay, Froude, and Leslie Stephen — each in his own department — have acknowledged the supremacy of Swift. Scott regards him as the painter of character, Macaulay as the literary artist, Froude as the politician, Leslie Stephen as the moralist and the philosopher. Scott has pointed out that Lemuel Gulliver the traveller, Isaac Bickerstaff the astrologer, the Frenchman who writes the new Journey to Paris, Mrs. Harris, Mary the cookmaid, the grave projector who proposes a plan for relieving the poor by eating their children, and the vehement Whig politician who remonstrates against the enormities of the Dublin signs, are all persons as distinct from each other as from the dean himself, and in all their surroundings absolutely true to the life.* Mr. Froude remarks that Swift, who was in the best and noblest sense an Irish patriot, poured out tract after tract denouncing Irish misgovernment, each of them composed with supreme literary power, a just and burning indignation showing through the most finished irony. "In these tracts, in colors which will never fade, lies the picture of Ireland, as England, half in ignorance, half in wilful despair of her amendment, had willed that she should be."† Mr. Leslie Stephen, after admitting that Swift is the keenest satirist as well as the acutest critic in the English language, adds that his imagination was fervid enough to give such forcible utterance to his feelings as has scarcely been rivalled in our literature.‡ Lord Macaulay's testimony is even more valuable. Macaulay disliked Swift with his habitual energy of dislike. It must be confessed that the complex characters where heroism and weakness are subtly interwoven — Bacon, Dryden, Swift — did not lend themselves readily to the manipulation of that brilliant master.§ Yet in spite of his repug-

nance to the man, his admiration of the magnificent faculty of the satirist is emphatic and unstinted. Under that plain garb and ungainly deportment were concealed, he tells us, some of the choicest gifts that have ever been bestowed on the children of men, — rare powers of observation; brilliant wit; grotesque invention; humor of the most austere flavor, yet exquisitely delicious; eloquence singularly pure, manly, and perspicuous.* We need not multiply authorities. It must now be conceded, for all practical purposes, that the consent of the learned world to Swift's intellectual pre-eminence has been deliberately and finally given.

It is asserted by the same critic that Swift's reputation has been gained "by a less degree of effort than that of almost any other writer," his writings, in point of *length*, being altogether insignificant. To this curious complaint we might be content to reply in Mr. Leslie Stephen's words: "A modern journalist who could prove that he had written as little in six months would deserve a testimonial." An age of which Mr. Gladstone is the prophet is tender to, if not vain of, verbosity; but the great books of the world are not to be measured by their *size*. Hume's "Essay on Miracles," which may be said to have revolutionized the whole course of modern thought, is compressed into some twenty pages. "A Tale of a Tub" is shorter than a Budget speech which will be forgotten to-morrow: but then — how far-reaching is the argument; the interest — how world-wide; the scorn — how consummate! Brief as Swift is, he makes it abundantly clear, before he is done, that there are no limits to his capacity. He has looked all round our globe — as from another star. It is true that with the most lucid intelligence he united the most lurid scorn. Though he saw them as from a remote planet, he hated the pigmies — the little odious vermin — with the intensity of a next-door neighbor. Yet this keenness of feeling was in a measure perhaps the secret of his power, — it gave that amazing air of reality to his narrative which makes us feel, when we return from Brobdingnag, that human beings are ridiculously and

of exquisite urbanity and a charming style, Addison, both as man and writer, has been prodigiously overrated by Macaulay. The others had sounded depths which his plummet could not reach, had scaled heights on which he had never ventured. This, to be sure, may have been his attraction for Macaulay, to whom the difficult subtleties of the imagination and the ardent aspirations of the spiritual life were enigmatical and antipathetic, — a riddle and a byword.

* History of England, vol. iv., p. 360.

* Memoirs of Jonathan Swift, D.D., p. 439.

† The English in Ireland. By J. A. Froude. Vol. i., pp. 501-503.

‡ English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, vol. i., p. 209, vol. ii., p. 375.

§ Addison was his literary hero; but surely, in spite

unaccountably small. Swift was a great master of the idiomatic — one of the greatest; but his intellectual lucidity was not less noticeable than his verbal. His eye was indeed *too* keen, *too* penetrating: he did not see through shams and plausibilities only; he saw through the essential decencies of life as well. Thus he spoke with appalling plainness of many things which nature has wisely hidden; and he became at times in consequence outrageously coarse.

Swift, it is said, never laughed; but when he unbent himself intellectually, he was, we think, at his best. The serious biographer complains of the rough horse-play of his humor — of his weakness for puns and practical jokes. The puns, however, were often very fair; and the humorous perception that could meet William's favorite *Recepit non rapuit*, with the apt retort, "The receiver is as bad as the thief" — or could apply on the instant to the lady whose mantua had swept down a Cremona fiddle, *Mantua, vae misera nimium vicina Cremona!* — must have been nimble and adroit. Even the practical joking was good in its way. The dearly beloved Roger is probably apocryphal, — borrowed from some older jest-book; but the praying and fasting story, as told by Sir Walter, is certainly very comical, and seems to be authentic.* Mr. Bickerstaff's controversy with Partridge the almanack-maker is, however, Swift's highest achievement in this line. His mirth (when not moody and ferocious) was of the gayest kind — the freest and finest play of the mind. It is not mere trifling; there is strenuous logic as well as deft wit: so that even Partridge has his serious side. Whately's "Historic Doubts regarding Napoleon Buona-partre" are now nearly forgotten; but they suggest to us what may have been in Swift's mind when he assured the unlucky

astrologer that logically he was dead (if not buried), and that he need not think to persuade the world that he was still alive. The futility of human testimony upon the plainest matter of fact has never been more ludicrously, yet vividly exposed.

The grave conduct of an absurd proposition is of course one of the most striking characteristics of Swift's style; but the unaffected simplicity and stolid unconsciousness with which he looks the reader in the face when relating the most astonishing fictions, is, it seems to us, an even higher reach of his art. It is quite impossible to doubt the good faith of the narrator; and when we are told that "the author was so distinguished for his veracity, that it became a sort of proverb among his neighbors at Redriff, when any one affirmed a thing, that it was as true as if Mr. Gulliver had spoken it," we are not surprised at the seaman who swore that he knew Mr. Gulliver very well, but that he lived at Wapping, not at Rotherhite. How admirable is the parenthetical, "being little for her age," in the account of Glumdalclitch, "She was very good-natured, and not above forty feet high, being little for her age;" or the description of the queen's dwarf, "Nothing angered and mortified me so much as the queen's dwarf, who being of the lowest stature that was ever in that country (for I verily think he was not full thirty feet high), became so insolent at seeing a creature so much beneath him, that he would always affect to swagger and look big as he passed by me in the queen's ante-chamber"! One cannot believe that Swift was so unutterably miserable when he was engaged on "Gulliver," or that he wrote his "travels" — the earlier voyages at least — not to amuse the world, but to vex it. This consummate artist was a great satirist as well as a great storyteller; but it is the art of the delightful storyteller, not of the wicked satirist, that makes Gulliver immortal.

Swift's verse, like his prose, was mainly remarkable for its resolute homeliness; but when the scorn or the indignation or the pity becomes intense, it sometimes attains, as we have seen, a very high level indeed. "The Jolly Beggars" of Burns is scarcely superior in idiomatic pith and picturesqueness to the opening stanzas of the "Rhapsody on Poetry:" —

Not empire to the rising sun,
By valor, conduct, fortune won;
Not highest wisdom in debates
For framing laws to govern States;

* Scott's Life of Swift, p. 381. The whole note is worth quoting, as containing some characteristic details of manner, etc. "There is another well-attested anecdote, communicated by the late Mr. William Waller of Allantown, near Kells, to Mr. Theophilus Swift. Mr. Waller, while a youth, was riding near his father's house, when he met a gentleman on horseback reading. A little surprised, he asked the servant, who followed him at some distance, where they came from. 'From the Black Lion,' answered the man. 'And where are you going?' 'To heaven I believe,' rejoined the servant, 'for my master's praying and I am fasting.' On further inquiry it proved that the dean, who was then going to Laracor, had rebuked the man for presenting him in the morning with dirty boots. 'Were they clean,' answered the fellow, 'they would soon be dirty again.' 'And if you eat your breakfast,' retorted the dean, 'you will be hungry again, so you shall proceed without it,' which circumstance gave rise to the man's *bon-mot*."

Not skill in sciences profound
So large to grasp the circle round, —
Such heavenly influence require
As how to strike the muses' lyre.

Not beggar's brat on bulk begot;
Not bastard of a pedlar Scot;
Not boy brought up to cleaning shoes,
The spawn of Bridewell or the stew;
Not infants dropt, the spurious pledges
Of gipsies lit'ring under hedges, —
Are so disqualified by fate
To rise in Church, or law, or State,
As he whom Phœbus in his ire
Hath blasted with poetic fire.

Yet the impeachment of Swift as the *writer* has, after all, a basis of fact. His influence was largely personal. He was greater than his books. It is easy to take up one of his pamphlets now, and criticise the style, which is sometimes loose and slovenly, at our leisure. *But it did its work.* It struck home. *That*, after all, is the true standard by which the dean should be judged. He was a ruler of men, and he knew how to rule. If he had been bred to politics, if he had occupied a recognized place, not in the Church, but in the House of Commons, he would have been one of our greatest statesmen. The sheer personal ascendancy of his character was as marked in political as in private life. Friend and foe alike admitted that his influence, when fairly exerted, was irresistible. He was one of those potent elemental forces which occasionally appear in the world, and which, when happily circumstanced — when not chained as Prometheus was, or tortured as Swift was — revolutionize society. The unfriendly Johnson, as we have seen, was forced to confess that for several years Swift formed the political opinions of the English nation; and Carteret frankly admitted that he had succeeded in governing Ireland because he pleased Dr. Swift. "Dr. Swift had commanded him," said Lord Rivers, "and he durst not refuse it." And Lord Bathurst remarked, that by an hour's work in his study an Irish parson had often "made three kingdoms drunk at once." We cannot be induced to believe by any criticism, however trenchant, that the man who could do all this was not only "bad" but "small."

From Macmillan's Magazine.
THE WIZARD'S SON.

CHAPTER I.

THE Methvens occupied a little house in the outskirts of a little town where

there was not very much going on of any description, and still less which they could take any share in, being, as they were, poor and unable to make any effective response to the civilities shown to them. The family consisted of three persons — the mother, who was a widow with one son; the son himself, who was a young man of three or four and twenty; and a distant cousin of Mrs. Methven's, who lived with her, having no other home. It was not a very happy household. The mother had a limited income and an anxious temper; the son a somewhat volatile and indolent disposition, and no ambition at all as to his future, nor anxiety as to what was going to happen to him in life. This, as may be supposed, was enough to introduce many uneasy elements into their joint existence; and the third of the party, Miss Merivale, was not of the class of the peacemakers to whom Scripture allots a special blessing. She had no amiable glamor in her eyes, but saw her friends' imperfections with a clearness of sight which is little conducive to that happy progress of affairs which is called "getting on." The Methvens were sufficiently proud to keep their difficulties out of the public eye, but on very many occasions, unfortunately, it had become very plain to themselves that they did not "get on." It was not any want of love. Mrs. Methven was herself aware, and her friends were in the constant habit of saying, that she had sacrificed everything for Walter. Injudicious friends are fond of making such statements, by way, it is to be supposed, of increasing the devotion and gratitude of the child to the parent: but the result is, unfortunately, very often the exact contrary of what is desired — for no one likes to have his duty in this respect pointed out to him, and whatever good people may think, it is not in itself an agreeable thought that "sacrifices" have been made for one, and an obligation placed upon one's shoulders from the beginning of time, independent of any wish or claim upon the part of the person served. The makers of sacrifices have seldom the reward which surrounding spectators, and in many cases themselves, think their due. Mrs. Methven herself would probably have been at a loss to name what were the special sacrifices she had made for Walter. She had remained a widow, but that she would have been eager to add was no sacrifice. She had pinched herself more or less to find the means for his education, which had been of what is supposed in England to be the

best kind: and she had, while he was a boy, subordinated her own tastes and pleasures to his, and eagerly sought out everything that was likely to be agreeable to him. When they took their yearly holiday—as it is considered necessary now to do—places that Walter liked, or where he could find amusement, or had friends, were eagerly sought for. “Women,” Mrs. Methven said, “can make themselves comfortable anywhere; but a boy, you know, is quite different.” “Quite,” Miss Merivale would say: “oh, if you only knew them as well as we do; they are creatures entirely without resources. You must put their toys into their very hands.” “There is no question of toys with Walter—he has plenty of resources. It is not that,” Mrs. Methven would explain, growing red. “I hope I am not one of the silly mothers that thrust their children upon everybody: but of course, a boy must be considered. Everybody who has had to do with men—or boys—knows that they must be considered.” A woman whose life has been mixed up with these troublesome beings feels the superiority of her experience to those who know nothing about them. And in this way, without spoiling him or treating him with ridiculous devotion, as the king of her fate, Walter had been “considered” all his life.

For the rest, Mrs. Methven had, it must be allowed, lived a much more agreeable life in the little society of Sloebury when her son was young than she did now that he had come to years, mis-named, of discretion. Then she had given her little tea-parties, or even a small occasional dinner, at which her handsome boy would make his appearance when it was holiday time, interesting everybody; or, when absent, would still furnish a very pleasant subject of talk to the neighbors, who thought his mother did a great deal too much for him, but still were pleased to discuss a boy who was having the best of educations, and at a public school. In those days she felt herself very comfortable in Sloebury, and was asked to all the best houses, and felt a modest pride in the certainty that she was able to offer something in return. But matters were very different when Walter was four and twenty instead of fourteen. By that time it was apparent that he was not going to take the world by storm, or set the Thames on fire; and, though she had been too sensible to brag, Mrs. Methven had thought both these things possible, and perhaps had allowed it to be per-

ceived that she considered something great, something out of the way, to be Walter's certain career. But twenty-four is, as she said herself, so different! He had been unsuccessful in some of his examinations, and for others he had not been “properly prepared.” His mother did not take refuge in the thought that the examiners were partial or the trials unfair; but there was naturally always a word as to the reason why he did not succeed—he had not been “properly prepared.” He knew of one only a few days before the eventful moment, and at this time of day, she asked indignantly, when everything is got by competition, how is a young man who has not “crammed” to get the better of one who has? The fact remained that at twenty-four, Walter, evidently a clever fellow, with a great many endowments, had got nothing to do; and, what was worse—a thing which his mother, indeed, pretended to be unconscious of, but which everybody else in the town remarked upon—he was not in the least concerned about this fact, but took his doing nothing quite calmly as the course of nature, and neither suffered from it, nor made any effort to place himself in a different position. He “went in for” an examination when it was put before him as a thing to do, and took his failure more than philosophically when he failed, as, as yet, he had always done: and, in the mean time, contentedly lived on, without disturbing himself, and tranquilly let the time go by—the golden time which should have shaped his life.

This is not a state of affairs which can bring happiness to any household. There is a kind of parent—or rather it should be said of a mother, for no parent of the other sex is supposed capable of so much folly—to whom everything is good that her child, the cherished object of her affections, does; and this is a most happy regulation of nature, and smoothes away the greatest difficulties of life for many simple-hearted folk, without doing half so much harm as is attributed to it; for disapproval has little moral effect, and lessens the happiness of all parties, without materially lessening the sins of the erring. But, unfortunately, Mrs. Methven was not of this happy kind. She saw her son's faults almost too clearly, and they gave her the most poignant pain. She was a proud woman, and that he should suffer in the opinion of the world was misery and grief to her. She was stung to the heart by disappointment in the failure of her many hopes and projects for him.

She was stricken with shame to think of all the fine things that had been predicted of Walter in his boyish days, and that not one of them had come true. People had ceased now to speak of the great things that Walter would do. They asked, "What was he going to do?" in an entirely altered tone, and this went to her heart. Her pride suffered the most terrible blow. She could not bear the thought; and though she maintained a calm face to the world, and represented herself as entirely satisfied, Walter knew otherwise, and had gradually replaced his old careless affection for his mother by an embittered opposition and resistance to her, which made both their lives wretched enough. How it was that he did not make an effort to escape from her continual remonstrances, her appeals and entreaties, her censure and criticism, it is very difficult to tell. To have gone away, and torn her heart with anxiety, but emancipated herself from a yoke which it was against the dignity of his manhood to bear, would have been much more natural. But he had no money, and he had not the energy to seize upon any way of providing for himself. Had such an opportunity fallen at his feet he would probably have accepted it with fervor; but fortune did not put herself out of the way to provide for him, nor he to be provided for. Notwithstanding the many scenes which took place in the seclusion of that poor little house, when the mother, what with love, shame, mortification, and impatience, would all but rave in impotent passion, appealing to him, to the pride, the ambition, the principle which so far as could be seen the young man did not possess, Walter held upon his way with an obstinate pertinacity, and did nothing. How he managed to do this without losing all self-respect and every better feeling it is impossible to say; but he did so somehow, and was still "a nice enough fellow," notwithstanding that everybody condemned him; and had not even lost the good opinion of the little society, though it was unanimous in blame. The only way in which he responded to his mother's remonstrances and complaints was by seeking his pleasure and such occupation as contented him — which was a little cricket now and then, a little lawn-tennis, a little flirtation — as far away from her as possible; and by being as little at home as possible. His temper was a little spoilt by the scenes which awaited him when he went home; and these seemed to justify to himself his gradual separa-

tion from his mother's house: but never induced him to sacrifice, or even modify, his own course. He appeared to think that he had a justification for his conduct in the opposition it met with; and that his pride was involved in the necessity for never giving in. If he had been let alone, he represented to himself, everything would have been different; but to yield to this perpetual bullying was against every instinct. And even the society which disapproved so much gave a certain encouragement to Walter in this point of view: for it was Mrs. Methven whom everybody blamed. It was her ridiculous pride, or her foolish indulgence, or her sinful backing-up of his natural indolence; even some people thought it was her want of comprehension of her son which had done it, and that Walter would have been entirely a different person in different hands. If she had not thought it a fine thing to have him appear as a useless fine gentleman above all necessity of working for his living, it was incredible that he could have allowed the years to steal by without making any exertion. This was what the town decided, not without a good deal of sympathy for Walter. What could be expected? Under the guidance of a foolish mother, a young man always went wrong; and in this case he did not go wrong, poor fellow! he only wasted his existence, nothing worse. Sloebury had much consideration for the young man.

Perhaps it added something to the exasperation with which Mrs. Methven saw all her efforts fail that she had some perception of this, and knew that it was supposed to be her fault. No doubt in her soul it added to the impatience and indignation and pain with which she contemplated the course of affairs, which she was without strength to combat, yet could not let alone. Now and then, indeed, she did control herself so far as to let them alone, and then there was nothing but tranquillity and peace in the house. But she was a conscientious woman, and, poor soul! she had a temper — the very complacency and calm with which her son went upon his way, the approval he showed of her better conduct when she left him to his own devices, struck her in some moments with such sudden indignation and pain, that she could no longer contain herself. He, who might have been anything he pleased, to be nothing! He, of whom everybody had predicted such great things! At such moments the sight of Walter smiling, strolling along with his hands in his pockets, excited her

almost to frenzy. Poor lady! So many women would have been proud of him — a handsome young fellow in flannels, with his cricket bat or his racquet when occasion served. But love and injured pride were bitter in her heart, and she could not bear the sight. All this while, however, nobody knew anything about the scenes that arose in the little house, which preserved a show of happiness and tender union long after the reality was gone. Indeed, even Miss Merivale, who had unbounded opportunities of knowing, took a long time to make up her mind that Walter and his mother did not "get on."

Such was the unfortunate state of affairs at the time when this history begins. The Methvens were distantly connected, it was known, with a great family in Scotland, which took no notice whatever of them, and, indeed, had very little reason so to do, Captain Methven being long since dead, and his widow and child entirely unknown to the noble house, from which it was so great an honor to derive a little, much-diluted, far-off drop of blood, more blue and more rich than the common. It is possible that had the connection been by Mrs. Methven's side she would have known more about it, and taken more trouble to keep up her knowledge of the family. But it was not so, and she had even in her younger days been conscious of little slights and neglects which had made her rather hostile than otherwise to the great people from whom her husband came. "I know nothing about the Erradeens," she would say; "they are much too grand to take any notice of us: and I am too proud to seek any notice from them."

"I am afraid, my dear, there is a good deal in that," said old Mrs. Wynn, the wife of the old rector, shaking her white head. This lady was a sort of benign embodiment of justice in Sloebury. She punished nobody, but she saw the right and wrong with a glance that was almost infallible, and shook her head though she never exacted any penalty.

Here Miss Merivale would seize the occasion to strike in.

"Prejudice is prejudice," she said, "whatever form it takes. A lord has just as much chance of being nice as an apothecary." This was said because the young doctor, newly admitted into his father's business, who thought no little of himself, was within reach, and just then caught Miss Merivale's eye.

"That is a very safe speech, seeing there are neither lords nor apothecaries

here," he said with the blandest smile. He was not a man to be beaten at such a game.

"But a lord may have influence, you know. For Walter's sake I would not lose sight of him," said Mrs. Wynn.

"You cannot lose sight of what you have never seen: besides, influence is of no consequence nowadays. Nobody can do anything for you—save yourself," said Mrs. Methven with a little sigh. Her eyes turned involuntarily to where Walter was. He was always in the middle of everything that was going on. Among the Sloebury young people he had a little air of distinction, or so at least his mother thought. She was painfully impartial, and generally, in her anxiety, perceived his bad points rather than his good ones; but as she glanced at the group, love for once allowed itself to speak, though always with an accent peculiar to the character of the thinker. She allowed to herself that he had an air of distinction, a something more than the others—alas, that nothing ever came of it! The others, all, or almost all, were already launched in the world. They were doing or trying to do something—whereas Walter! But she took care that nobody should hear that irrepressible sigh.

"I am very sorry for it," said Mrs. Wynn, "for there are many people who would never push for themselves, and yet do very well indeed when they are put in the way."

"I am all for the pushing people," said Miss Merivale. "I like the new state of affairs. When every one stands for himself, and you get just as much as you work for, there will be no grudges and sulkings with society. Though I'm a Tory, I like every man to make his own way."

"A lady's politics are never to be calculated upon," said the rector, who was standing up against the fire on his own hearth, rubbing his old white hands. "It is altogether against the principles of Toryism, my dear lady, that a man should make his own way. It is sheer democracy. As for that method of examinations, it is one of the most levelling principles of the time—it is one of Mr. Gladstone's instruments for the destruction of society. When the son of a cobbler is just as likely to come to high command as your son or mine, what is to become of the country?" the old clergyman said, lifting those thin white hands.

Mr. Gladstone's name was as a firebrand thrown into the midst of this peaceable

little country community. The speakers all took fire. They thought that there was no doubt about what was going to come of the country. It was going to destruction as fast as fate could carry it. When society had dropped to pieces, and the rabble had come uppermost, and England had become a mere name, upon which all foreign nations should trample, and wild Irishmen dance war dances, and Americans exhortate, then Mr. Gladstone would be seen in his true colors. While this was going on, old Mrs. Wynn sat in her easy-chair and shook her head. She declared always that she was no politician. And young Walter Methven, attracted by the sudden quickening of the conversation which naturally attended the introduction of this subject, came forward, ready in the vein of opposition which was always his favorite attitude.

"Mr. Gladstone must be a very great man," he said. "I hear it is a sign of being in society when you foam at the mouth at the sound of his name."

"You young fellows think it fine to be on the popular side; but wait till you are my age," cried one of the eager speakers. "It will not matter much to me. There will be peace in my days." "But wait," cried another, "and see how you will like it when everything topples down together, the crown, and the state, and the aristocracy, and public credit, and national honor, and property and the constitution, and —"

So many anxious and alarmed politicians here spoke together that the general voice became inarticulate, and Walter Methven, representing the opposition, was at liberty to laugh.

"Come one, come all!" he cried, backed up by the arm of the sofa, upon which Mrs. Wynn sat shaking her head. "It would be a fine thing for me and all the other proletarians. Something would surely fall our way."

His mother watched him, standing up against the sofa, confronting them all, with her usual exasperated and angry affection. She thought, as she looked at him, that there was nothing he was not fit for. He was clever enough for Parliament; he might have been prime minister — but he was nothing! nothing, and likely to be nothing, doing nothing, desiring nothing. Her eye fell on young Wynn, the rector's nephew, who had just got a fellowship at his college, and on the doctor's son who was just entering into a share of his father's practice, and on Mr. Jeremy the young banker, whose atten-

tions fluttered any maiden to whom he might address them. They were Walter's contemporaries, and not one of them was worthy, she thought, to be seen by the side of her boy; but they had all got before him in the race of life. They were something and he was nothing. It was not much wonder if her heart was sore and angry. When she turned round to listen civilly to something that was said to her, her face was contracted and pale. It was more than she could bear. She made a move to go away before any of the party was ready, and disturbed Miss Merivale in the midst of a *l'été-à-l'été*, which was a thing not easily forgiven.

Walter walked home with them in great good humor, but his mother knew very well that he was not coming in. He was going to finish the evening elsewhere. If he had come in would she have been able to restrain herself? Would she not have fallen upon him, either in anger or in grief, holding up to him the examples of young Wynn and young Jeremy and the little doctor? She knew she would not have been able to refrain, and it was almost a relief to her, though it was another pang, when he turned away at the door.

"I want to speak to Underwood about to-morrow," he said.

"What is there about to-morrow? Of all the people in Sloebury Captain Underwood is the one I like least," she said. "Why must you always have something to say to him when every one else is going to bed?"

"I am not going to bed, nor is he," said Walter lightly.

Mrs. Methven's nerves were highly strung. Miss Merivale had passed in before them, and there was nobody to witness this little struggle which she knew would end in nothing, but which was inevitable. She grasped him by the arm in her eagerness and pain.

"Oh, my boy!" she said, "come in, come in, and think of something more than the amusement of to-morrow. Life is not all play, though you seem to think so. For once listen to me, Walter — oh, listen to me! You cannot go on like this. Think of all the others; all at work, every one of them, and you doing nothing."

"Do you want me to begin to do something now," said Walter, "when you have just told me everybody was going to bed?"

"Oh! if I were you," she cried in her excitement, "I would rest neither night

nor day. I would not let it be said that I was the last, and every one of them before me."

Walter shook himself free of her detaining hold. "Am I to be a dustman, or a scavenger, or—what?" he said contemptuously. "I know no other trades that are followed at this hour."

Mrs. Methven had reached the point at which a woman has much ado not to cry in the sense of impotence and exasperation which such an argument brings. "It is better to do anything than to do nothing," she cried, turning away from him and hastening in at the open door.

He paused a moment, as if doubtful what to do; there was something in her hasty withdrawal which for an instant disposed him to follow, and she paused breathless, with a kind of hope, in the half-light of the little hall; but the next moment his footsteps sounded clear and quick on the pavement, going away. Mrs. Methven waited until they were almost out of hearing before she closed the door. Angry, baffled, helpless, what could she do? She wiped a hot tear from the corner of her eye before she went into the drawing-room, where her companion, always on the alert, had already turned up the light of the lamp, throwing an undesired illumination upon her face, flushed and troubled from this brief controversy.

"I thought you were never coming in," said Miss Merivale, "and that open door sends a draught all through the house."

"Walter detained me for a moment to explain some arrangements he has to make for to-morrow," Mrs. Methven said with dignity. "He likes to keep me *au courant* of his proceedings."

Miss Merivale was absolutely silenced by this sublime assumption, notwithstanding the flush of resentment, the glimmer of moisture in the mother's eye.

CHAPTER II.

WALTER walked along the quiet, almost deserted street with a hasty step and a still hastier rush of disagreeable thoughts. There was, he felt, an advantage in being angry, in the sensation of indignant resistance to a petty tyranny. For a long time past he had taken refuge in this from every touch of conscience and sense of time lost and opportunities neglected. He was no genius, but he was not so dull as not to know that his life was an entirely unsatisfactory one, and himself in the wrong altogether; everything rotten in the state of his existence, and a great

deal that must be set right one time or another in all his habits and ways. The misfortune was that it was so much easier to put off this process till to-morrow than to begin it to-day. He had never been roused out of the boyish condition of mind in which a certain resistance to authority was natural, and opposition to maternal rule and law a sort of proof of superiority and independence. Had this been put into words, and placed before him as the motive of much that he did, no one would have colored more angrily or resented more hotly the suggestion; and yet in the bottom of his heart he would have known it to be true. All through his unoccupied days he carried with him the sense of folly, the consciousness that he could not justify to himself the course he was pursuing. The daily necessity of justifying it to another was almost the sole thing that silenced his conscience. His mother, who kept "nagging" day after day, who was never satisfied, whose appeals he sometimes thought theatrical, and her passion got up, was his sole defence against that self-dissatisfaction which is the severest of all criticisms. If she would but let him alone, leave him to his own initiative, and not perpetually endeavor to force a change which to be effectual, as all authorities agreed, must come of itself! He was quite conscious of the inadequacy of this argument, and in his heart felt that it was a poor thing to take advantage of it; but yet, on the surface of his mind, put it forward and made a bulwark of it against his own conscience. He did so now as he hurried along, in all the heat that follows a personal encounter. If she would but let him alone! But he could not move a step anywhere, could not make an engagement, could not step into a friend's rooms, as he was going to do now, without her interference. The relations of a parent to an only child are not the same as those that exist between a father and mother and the different members of a large family. It has been usual to consider them in one particular light as implying the closest union and mutual devotion. But there is another point of view in which to consider the question. They are so near to each other, and the relationship so close, that there is a possibility of opposition and contrariety more trying, more absorbing, than any other except that between husband and wife. A young son does not always see the necessity of devotion to a mother who is not very old, who has still many sources of pleasure apart from himself, and

who is not capable, perhaps, on her side, of the indiscriminating worship which is grandmotherly, and implies a certain weakness and dimness of perception in the fond eyes that see everything in a rosy, ideal light. This fond delusion is often in its way a moral agent, obliging the object of it to fulfil what is expected of him, and reward the full and perfect trust which is given so unhesitatingly. But in this case it was not possible. The young man thought, or persuaded himself, that his mother's vexatious watch over him, and what he called her constant suspicion and doubt of him, had given him a reason for the disgust and impatience with which he turned from her control. He pictured to himself the difference which a father's larger, more generous sway would have made in him; to that he would have answered, he thought, like a ship to its helm, like an army to its general. But this petty rule, this perpetual fault-finding, raised up every faculty in opposition. Even when he meant the best, her words of warning, her reminders of duty, were enough to set him all wrong again. He thought, as a bad husband often thinks, when he is conscious of the world's disapproval, that it was her complaints that were the cause. And when he was reminded by others, well-meaning but injudicious, of all he owed to his mother, his mind rose yet more strongly in opposition, his spirit refused the claim. This is a very different picture from that of the widow's son whose earliest inspiration is his sense of duty to his mother, and adoring gratitude for her care and love—but it is perhaps as true a one. A young man may be placed in an unfair position by the excessive claim made upon his heart and conscience in this way, and so Walter felt it. He might have given all that, and more, if nothing had been asked of him; but when he was expected to feel so much, he felt himself half justified in feeling nothing. Thus the situation had become one of strained and continual opposition. It was a kind of duel, in which the younger combatant at least—the assailed person, whose free-will and independence were hampered by such perpetual requirements—never yielded a step. The other might do so, by turns throwing up her arms altogether, but not he.

It was with this feeling strong in his mind, and affecting his temper as nothing else does to such a degree, that he hastened along the street towards the rooms occupied by Captain Underwood, a per-

sonage whom the ladies of Sloebury were unanimous in disliking. Nobody knew exactly where it was that he got his military title. He did not belong to any regiment in her Majesty's service. He had not even the humble claim of a militia officer; yet nobody dared say that there was anything fictitious about him, or stigmatize the captain as an impostor. Other captains and colonels and men-at-arms of undoubted character supported his claims; he belonged to one or two well-known clubs. An angry woman would sometimes fling an insult at him when her husband or son came home penniless after an evening in his company, wondering what they could see in an underbred fellow who was no more a captain (she would say in her wrath) than she was; but of these assertions there was no proof, and the vehemence of them naturally made the captain's partisans more and more eager in his favor. He had not been above six months in Sloebury, but everybody knew him. There was scarcely an evening in which half-a-dozen men did not congregate in his rooms, drawn together by that strange attraction which makes people meet who do not care in the least for each other's company, nor have anything to say to each other, yet are possibly less vacant in society than when alone, or find the murmur of many voices, the smoke of many cigars, exhilarating and agreeable. It was not every evening that the cards were produced. The captain was wary; he frightened nobody; he did not wish to give occasion to the tremors of the ladies, whom he would have conciliated even, if he had been able; but there are men against whom the instinct of all women rises, as there are women from whom all men turn. It was only now and then that he permitted play. He spoke indeed strongly against it on many occasions. "What do you want with cards?" he would say. "A good cigar and a friend to talk to ought to be enough for any man." But twice or thrice in a week his scruples would give way. He was a tall, well-formed man, of an uncertain age, with burning, hazel eyes, and a scar on his forehead got in that mysterious service to which now and then he made allusion, and which his friends concluded must have been in some foreign legion, or with Garibaldi, or some other irregular warfare. There were some who thought him a man, old for his age, of thirty-five, and some who, concluding him young for his age and well preserved, credited him with twenty years more; but

thirty-five or fifty-five, whichever it was, he was erect and strong, and well set up, and possessed an amount of experience and apparent knowledge of the world, at which the striplings of Sloebury admired and wondered, and which even the older men respected, as men in the country respect the mention of great names and incidents that have become historical. He had a way of recommending himself even to the serious, and would now and then break forth, as if reluctantly, into an account of some instance of faith or patience on the battle-field or the hospital which made even the rector declare that to consider Underwood as an irreligious man was both unjust and unkind. So strong was the prejudice of the women, however, that Mrs. Wynn, always charitable, and whose silent protest was generally only made when the absent were blamed, shook her head at this testimony borne in favor of the captain. She had no son to be led away, and her husband it need not be said, considering his position, was invulnerable; but with all her charity she could not believe in the religion of Captain Underwood. His rooms were very nice rooms in the best street in Sloebury, and if his society was what is called "mixed," yet the best people were occasionally to be met there, as well as those who were not the best.

There was a little stir in the company when Walter entered. To tell the truth, notwithstanding the wild mirth and dissipation which the ladies believed to go on in Captain Underwood's rooms, the society assembled there was at the moment dull and in want of a sensation. There had not been anything said for the course of two minutes at least. There was no play going on, and the solemn puff of smoke from one pair of lips after another would have been the height of monotony had it not been the wildest fun and gratification. The men in the room took pipes and cigars out of their mouths to welcome the newcomer. "Hallo, Walter!" they all said in different tones; for in Sloebury the use of Christian names was universal, everybody having known everybody else since the moment of their birth.

"Here comes Methven," said the owner of the rooms (it was one of his charms, in the eyes of the younger men, that he was not addicted to this familiarity), "in the odor of sanctity. It will do us all good to have an account of the rector's party. How did you leave the old ladies, my excellent boy?"

"Stole away like the fox, by Jove," said

the hunting man, who was the pride of Sloebury.

"More like the mouse with the old cats after it," said another wit.

Now Walter had come in among them strong in his sense of right and in his sense of wrong, feeling himself at the same moment a sorry fool and an injured hero, a sufferer for the rights of man; and it would have been of great use to him in both these respects to have felt himself step into a superior atmosphere, into the heat of a political discussion, or even into noisy amusement, or the passion of play — anything which would rouse the spirits and energies, and show the action of a larger life. But to feel his own arrival a sort of godsend in the dullness, and to hear nothing but the heavy puff of all the smoke, and the very poor wit with which he was received, was sadly disconcerting, and made him more and more angry with himself and the circumstances which would give him no sort of support or comfort.

"The old ladies," he said, "were rather more lively than you fellows. You look as if you had all been poisoned in your wine, like the men in the opera, and expected the wall to open and the monks and the coffins to come in."

"I knew that Methven would bring us some excellent lesson," said Captain Underwood. "Remember that we have all to die. Think, my friends, upon your latter end."

"Jump up here and give us a sermon, Wat."

"Don't tease him, he's dangerous."

"The old ladies have been too much for him."

This went on till Walter had settled down into his place, and lighted his pipe like the rest. He looked upon them with disenchanted eyes; not that he had ever entertained any very exalted opinion of his company; but to-night he was out of sympathy with all his surroundings, and he felt it almost a personal offence that there should be so little to attract and excite in this manly circle which thought so much more of itself than of any other, and was so scornful of the old ladies, who after all were not old ladies, but the graver members of the community in general, with an ornamental adjunct of young womankind. On ordinary occasions no doubt Walter would have chimed in with the rest, but to-night he was dissatisfied and miserable, not sure of any sensation in particular, but one of scorn and distaste for his surroundings. He would

have felt this in almost any conceivable case, but in the midst of this poor jesting and would-be wit, the effect was doubled. Was it worth while for this to waste his time, to offend the opinion of all his friends? Such thoughts must always come in similar circumstances. Even in the most brilliant revelry there will be a pause, a survey of the position, a sense, however unwilling, that the game is not worth the candle. But here! They were all as dull as ditch-water, he said to himself. Separately there was scarcely one whom he would have selected as an agreeable companion, and was it possible by joining many dullnesses together to produce a brilliant result? There was no doubt that Walter's judgment was jaundiced that evening; for he was not by any means so contemptuous of his friends on ordinary occasions; but he had been eager to find an excuse for himself, to be able to say that here was real life and genial society in place of the affected solemnity of the proper people. When he found himself unable to do this, he was struck as by a personal grievance, and sat moody and abstracted, bringing a chill upon everybody, till one by one the boon companions strolled away.

"A pretty set of fellows to talk of dullness," he cried, with a little burst, "as if they were not dull beyond all description themselves."

"Come, Methven, you are out of temper," said Captain Underwood. "They are good fellows enough when you are in the vein for them. Something has put you out of joint."

"Nothing at all," cried Walter, "except the sight of you all sitting as solemn as owls pretending to enjoy yourselves. At the rectory one yawned indeed, it was the genius of the place — but to hear all those dull dogs laughing at that, as if they were not a few degrees worse! Is there nothing but dullness in life? Is everything the same — one way or another — and nothing to show for it all, when it is over, but tediousness and discontent?"

Underwood looked at him keenly with his fiery eyes.

"So you've come to that already, have you?" he said. "I thought you were too young and foolish."

"I am not so young as not to know that I am behaving like an idiot," Walter said. Perhaps he had a little hope of being contradicted and brought back to his own esteem.

But instead of this, Captain Underwood only looked at him again and laughed.

"I know," he said: "the conscience has its tremors, especially after an evening at the rectory. You see how well respectability looks, how comfortable it is."

"I do nothing of the sort," Walter cried indignantly. "I see how dull you are, you people who scoff at respectability, and I begin to wonder whether it is not better to be dull and thrive than to be dull and perish. They seem much the same thing so far as enjoyment goes."

"You want excitement," said the other carelessly. "I allow there is not much of that here."

"I want something," cried Walter. "Cards even are better than nothing. I want to feel that I have blood in my veins."

"My dear boy, all that is easily explained. You want money. Money is the thing that mounts the blood in the veins. With money you can have as much excitement, as much movement as you like. Let people say what they please, there is nothing else that does it," said the man of experience. He took a choice cigar leisurely from his case as he spoke. "A bit of a country town like this, what can you expect from it? There is no go in them. They risk a shilling, and go away frightened if they lose. If they don't go to church on Sunday they feel all the remorse of a villain in a play. It's all petty here — everything's petty, both the vices and the virtues. I don't wonder you find it slow. What I find it, I don't need to say."

"Why do you stop here, then?" said Walter, not unnaturally, with a momentary stare of surprise. Then he resumed, being full of his own subject. "I know I'm an ass," he said, "I loaf about here doing nothing when I ought to be at work. I don't know why I do it; but neither do I know how to get out of it. You, that's quite another thing. You have no call to stay. I wonder you do: why do you? If I were as free as you, I should be off — before another day."

"Come along then," said Underwood good-humoredly. "I'll go if you'll go."

At this Walter shook his head.

"I have no money, you know. I ought to be in an office or doing something. I can't go off to shoot here or fish there, like you."

"By-and-by — by-and-by. You have time enough to wait."

Walter gave him a look of surprise.

"There is nothing to wait for," he said. "Is that why you have said so many

things to me about seeing life? I have nothing. We've got no money in the family. I may wait till doomsday, but it will do nothing for me."

"Don't be too sure of that," said Underwood. "Oh, you needn't devour me with your eyes. I know nothing of your family affairs. I suppose of course that by-and-by, in the course of nature —"

"You mean," said Walter, turning pale, "when my mother dies. No, I'm not such a wretched cad as that: if I didn't know I should get next to nothing then, I —" (His conscience nearly tripped this young man up, running into his way so hurriedly that he caught his foot unawares.) Then he stopped and grew red, staring at his companion. "Most of what she has dies with her, if that's what you're thinking of. There is nothing in that to build upon. And I'm glad of it," the young man cried.

"I beg your pardon, Methven," said the other. "But it needn't be that; there are other ways of getting rich."

"I don't know any of them, unless by work: and how am I to work? It is so easy to speak. What can I work at? and where am I to get it? — there is the question. I hear enough on that subject — as if I were a tailor or a shoemaker that could find something to do at any corner. There is no reason in it," the young man said, so hotly, and with such a flush of resentful obstinacy, that the fervor of his speech betrayed him. He was like a man who had outrun himself, and paused, out of breath.

"You'll see; something will turn up," said Underwood, with a laugh.

"What can turn up? — nothing. Suppose I go to New Zealand and come back at fifty with my fortune made — fifty's just the age, isn't it, to begin to enjoy yourself," cried Walter scornfully; "when you have not a tooth left, nor a faculty perfect?" He was so young that the half-century appeared to him like the age of Methusaleh, and men who lived to that period as having outlived all that is worth living for. His mentor laughed a little uneasily, as if he had been touched by this chance shot.

"It is not such a terrible age after all," he said. "A man can still enjoy himself when he is fifty; but I grant you that at twenty-four it's a long time to wait for your pleasure. However, let us hope something will turn up before then. Supposing, for the sake of argument, you were to come in to your fortune more speedily, I wonder what you would do

with it — eh? you are such a terrible fellow for excitement. The turf?"

"All that is folly," said Walter, getting up abruptly. "Nothing more, thanks. I am coming in to no fortune. And you don't understand me a bit," he said, turning at the door of the room, to look back upon the scene where he had himself spent so many hours, made piquant by a sense of that wrong-doing which supplies excitement when other motives fail. The chairs standing about as their occupants had thrust them away from the table, the empty glasses upon it, the disorder of the room, struck him with a certain sense of disgust. It was a room intended by nature to be orderly and sober, with heavy country-town furniture, and nothing about it that could throw any grace on disarray. The master of the place stood against the table swaying a somewhat heavy figure over it, and gazing at the young man with his fiery eyes. Walter's rudeness did not please him, any more than his abrupt withdrawal.

"Don't be too sure of that," he said, with an effort to retain his good-humored aspect. "If I don't understand you, I should like to know who does? and when that fortune comes, you will remember what I say."

"Pshaw!" Walter cried, impatiently turning away. A nod of his head was all the good-night he gave. He hurried down as he had hurried up, still as little contented, as full of dissatisfaction as when he came. This man who thought he understood him, who intended to influence him, revolted the young man's uneasy sense of independence, as much as did the bond of more lawful authority. Did Underwood, too, think him a child not able to guide himself? It was very late by this time, and the streets very silent. He walked quickly home through the wintry darkness of November, with a mind as thoroughly out of tune as it is possible to imagine. He had gone to Underwood's in the hot impulse of opposition, with the hope of getting rid temporarily, at least, of the struggle within him; but he had not got rid of it. The dull jokes of the assembled company had only made the raging of the inward storm more sensible, and the jaunty and presumptuous misconception with which his host received his involuntary confidences afterwards, had aggravated instead of soothing his mind. Indeed, Underwood's pretence at knowing all about it, his guesses and attempts to sound his companion's mind, and the blundering inter-

pretation of it into which he stumbled, filled Walter with double indignation and disgust. This man too he had thought much of, and expected superior intelligence from — and all that he had to say was an idiotic anticipation of some miraculous coming into a fortune which Walter was aware was as likely to happen to the beggar on the streets as to himself. He had been angry with nature and his mother when he left her door; he was angry with everybody when he returned to it, though his chief anger of all, and the root of all the others, was that anger with himself, which burnt within his veins, and which is the hardest of all others to quench out.

CHAPTER III.

WALTER was very late next morning as he had been very late at night. The ladies had breakfasted long before, and there was a look of reproach in the very table-cloth left there so much after the usual time, and scrupulously cleared of everything that the others had used, and arranged at one end, with the dish kept hot for him, and the small teapot just big enough for one, which was a sermon in itself. His mother was seated by the fire with her weekly books, which she was adding up. She said scarcely anything to him, except the morning greeting, filling out his tea with a gravity which was all the more crushing that there was nothing in it to object to, nothing to resent. Adding up accounts of itself is not cheerful work; but naturally the young man resented this seriousness all the more because he had no right to do so. It was intolerable, he felt, to sit and eat in presence of that silent figure partly turned away from him, jotting down the different amounts on a bit of paper, and absorbed in that occupation as if unconscious of his presence. Even scolding was better than this; Walter was perfectly conscious of all it was in her power to say. He knew by heart her remonstrances and appeals. But he disliked the silence more than all. He longed to take her by the shoulders, and cry, "What is it? What have you got to say to me? What do you mean by sitting there like a stone figure, and *meaning* it all the same!" He did not do this, knowing it would be foolish, and give his constant antagonist a certain advantage; but he longed to get rid of some of his own exasperation by such an act. It was with a kind of force over himself that he ate his breakfast, going through all the forms, prolonging it to the utmost of his power, helping

himself with deliberate solemnity in defiance of the spectator, who seemed so absorbed in her own occupation, but was, he felt sure, watching his every movement. It was not, however, until he had come to an end of his prolonged meal and of his newspaper, that his mother spoke.

"Do you think," she said, "that it would be possible for you to write that letter to Mr. Milnathort, of which I have spoken so often, to-day?"

"Oh, quite possible," said Walter carelessly.

"Will you do it, then? It seems to me very important to your interests. Will you really do it, and do it to-day?"

"I'll see about it," Walter said.

"I don't ask you to see about it. It is nothing very difficult. I ask you to do it at once — to-day."

He gazed at her for a moment with an angry obstinacy.

"I see no particular occasion for all this haste. It has stood over a good many days. Why should you insist so upon it now?"

"Every day that it has been put off has been a mistake. It should have been done at once," Mrs. Methven said.

"I'll see about it," he said carelessly; and he went out of the room with a sense of having exasperated her as usual, which was almost pleasant.

At the bottom of his heart he meant to do what his mother had asked of him: but he would not betray his good intentions. He preferred to look hostile even when he was in the mind to be obedient. He went away to the little sitting-room which was appropriated to him, where his pipes adorned the mantelpiece, and sat down to consider the situation. To write a letter was not a great thing to do, and he fully meant to do it; but after he had mused a little angrily upon the want of perception which made his mother adopt that cold and hectoring tone, when if she had asked him gently he would have done it in a minute, he put forth his hand and drew a book towards him. It was not either a new or an entertaining book, but it secured his idle attention until he suddenly remembered that it was time to go out. The letter was not written, but what did that matter? The post did not go out till the afternoon, and there was plenty of time between that time and this to write half-a-dozen letters. It would do very well, he thought, when he came in for lunch. So he threw down the book and got his hat and went out.

Mrs. Methven, who was on the watch, hearing his every movement, came into his room after he was gone, and looked round with eager eyes to see if the letter was written, if there was any trace of it. Perhaps he had taken it out with him to post it, she thought: and though it was injurious to her that she should not know something more about a piece of business in which he was not the sole person concerned, yet it gave her a sort of relief to think that so much at least he had done. She went back to her books with an easier mind. She was far from being a rich woman, but her son had known none of her little difficulties, her efforts to make ends meet. She had thought it wrong to trouble his childhood with such confidences, and he had grown up thinking nothing on the subject, without any particular knowledge of, or interest in, her affairs, taking everything for granted. It was her own fault, she said to herself, and so it was to some extent. She would sometimes think that if she had it to do over again she would change all that. How often do we think this, and with what bitter regret, in respect to the children whom people speak of as wax in our hands, till we suddenly wake up and find them iron! She had kept her difficulties out of Walter's way, and instead of being grateful to her for so doing, he was simply indifferent, neither inquiring nor caring to know. Her own doing! It was easier to herself, yet bitter beyond telling, to acknowledge it to be so. Just at this time, when Christmas was approaching, the ends took a great deal of tugging and coaxing to bring them together. A few of Walter's bills had come in unexpectedly, putting her poor balance altogether wrong. Miss Merivale contributed a little, but only a little, to the housekeeping; for Mrs. Methven was both proud and liberal, and understood giving better than receiving. She went back to the dining-room, where all her books lay upon the table, near the fire. Her reckoning had not advanced much since she had begun it, with Walter sitting at breakfast. Her faculties had been all absorbed in him and what he was doing. Now she addressed herself to her accounts with a strenuous effort. It is hard work to balance a small sum of money against a large number of bills, to settle how to divide it so as that everybody shall have something, and the mouths of hungry creditors be stopped. Perhaps we might say that this was one of the fine arts—so many pounds here, so many there, keeping

credit afloat, and the wolf of debt from the door. Mrs. Methven was skilled in it. She went to this work, feeling all its difficulty and burden: yet, with a little relief, not because she saw any way out of her difficulties, but because Walter had written that letter. It was always something done, she thought, in her simplicity, and something might come of it, some way in which he could get the means of exercising his faculties, perhaps of distinguishing himself even yet.

Walter for his part strolled away through the little town in his usual easy way. It was a fine, bright, wintery morning, not cold, yet cold enough to make brisk walking pleasant, and stir the blood in young veins. There was no football going on, nor any special amusement. He could not afford to hunt, and the only active winter exercise which he could attain was limited to this game—of which there was a good deal at Sloebury—and skating, when it pleased Providence to send ice, which was too seldom. He looked in upon one or two of his cronies, and played a game of billiards, and hung about the High Street to see what was going on. There was nothing particular going on, but the air was fresh, and the sun shining, and a little pleasant movement about, much more agreeable at least than sitting in a stuffy little room writing a troublesome letter which he felt sure would not do the least good. Finally, he met Captain Underwood, who regarded him with a look which Walter would have called anxious had he been able to imagine any possible reason why Underwood should entertain any anxiety on his account.

"Well! any news?" the captain cried. "News! What news should there be in this dead-alive place?" Walter said.

The other looked at him keenly as if to see whether he was quite sincere, and then said, "Come and have some lunch."

He was free of all the best resorts in Sloebury, this mysterious man. He belonged to the club, he was greatly at his ease in the hotel—everything was open to him. Walter, who had but little money of his own, and could not quite cut the figure he wished, was not displeased to be thus exhibited as the captain's foremost ally.

"I thought you might have come into that fortune, you are looking so spruce," the captain said, and laughed. But though he laughed he kept an eye on the young man, as if the pleasantry meant more than appeared. Walter felt a momentary irritation with this, which seemed to him a

very bad joke; but he went with the captain all the same, not without a recollection of the table at home, at which, after waiting three quarters of an hour or so, and watching at the window for his coming, the ladies would at last sit down. But he was not a child to be forced to attendance at every meal, he said to himself. The captain's attentions to him were great, and it was a very nice little meal that they had together.

"I expect you to do great things for me when you come into your fortune. You had better engage me at once as your guide, philosopher, and friend," he said, with a laugh. "Of course you will quit Sloebury, and make yourself free of all this bondage."

"Oh, of course," said Walter, humoring the joke, though it was so bad a one in every way.

He could not quarrel with his host at his own table, and perhaps after all it was more dignified to take it with good humor.

"You must not go in for mere expense," the captain said; "you must make it pay. I can put you up to a thing or two. You must not go into the world like a pigeon to be plucked. It would affect my personal honor if a pupil of mine—for I consider you as a pupil of mine, Methven, I think I have imparted to you a thing or two. You are not quite the simpleton you used to be, do you think you are?"

Walter received this with great gravity, though he tried to look as if he were not offended.

"Was I a simpleton?" he said. "I suppose in one's own case one never sees."

"Were you a simpleton!" said the other, with a laugh, and then he stopped himself, always keenly watching the young man's face, and perceiving that he was going too far. "But I flatter myself you could hold your own at whist with any man now," the captain said.

This pleased the young man; his gravity unbended a little; there was a visible relaxation of the corners of his mouth. To be praised is always agreeable. Moral applause, indeed, may be taken with composure, but who could hear himself applauded for his whist playing without an exhilaration of the heart? He said, with satisfaction, "I always was pretty good at games," at which his instructor laughed again, almost too much for perfect good breeding.

"I like to have young fellows like you to deal with," he said, "fellows with a little spirit, that are born for better things.

Your country-town young man is as fretful and frightened when he loses a few shillings as if it were thousands. But that's one of the reasons why I feel you're born to luck, my boy. I know a man of liberal breeding whenever I see him, he is not frightened about a nothing. That's one of the things I like in you, Methven. You deserve a fortune, and you deserve to have me for your guide, philosopher, and friend."

All this was said by way of joke; but it was strange to see the steady watch which he kept on the young man's face. One would have said a person of importance whom Underwood meant to try his strength with, but guardedly, without going too far, and even on whom he was somehow dependent, anxious to make a good impression. Walter, who knew his own favor to be absolutely without importance, and that Underwood above all, his host and frequent entertainer, could be under no possible delusion on the subject, was puzzled, yet flattered, feeling that only some excellence on his own part, undiscovered by any of his other acquaintances, could account for this. So experienced a person could have "no motive" in thus paying court to a penniless and prospectless youth. Walter was perplexed, but he was gratified too. He had not seen many of the captain's kind; nobody who knew so many people or who was so much at his ease with the world. Admiration of this vast acquaintance, and of the familiarity with which the captain treated things and people of which others spoke with bated breath, had varied in his mind with a fluctuating sense that Underwood was not exactly so elevated a person as he professed to be, and even that there were occasional vulgarities in this man of the world. Walter felt these, but in his ignorance represented to himself that perhaps they were right enough, and only seemed vulgar to him who knew no better. And to-day there is no doubt he was somewhat intoxicated by this flattery. It must be disinterested, for what could he do for anybody? He confided to the captain more than he had ever done before of his own position. He described how he was being urged to write to old Milnathort. "He is an old lawyer in Scotland—what they call a writer—and it is supposed he might be induced to take me into his office, for the sake of old associations. I don't know what the associations are, but the position does not smile upon me," Walter said.

"Your family then is a Scotch family?"

said the captain with a nod of approval. "I thought as much."

"I don't know that I've got a family," said Walter.

"On the contrary, Methven is a very good name. There are half-a dozen baronets at least, and a peer — you must have heard of him, Lord Erradeen."

"Oh yes, I've heard of him," Walter said with a conscious look.

If he had been more in the world he would have said, "He is a cousin of mine," but he was aware that the strain of kindred was very far off, and he was at once too shy and too proud to claim it. His companion waited apparently for the disclosure, then finding it did not come opened the way.

"If he's a relation of yours, it's to him you ought to write; very likely he would do something for you. They are a curious family. I've had occasion to know something about them."

"I think you know everybody, Underwood."

"Well, I have knocked about the world a great deal; in that way one comes across a great many people. I saw a good deal of the present lord at one time. He was a very queer man — they are all queer. If you are one of them you'll have to bear your share in it. There is a mysterious house they have — you would think I was an idiot if I told you half the stories I have heard —"

"About the Erradeens?"

"About everybody," said the captain evasively. "There is scarcely a family, that, if you go right into it, has not something curious about them. We all have; but those that last and continue keep it on record. I could tell you the wildest tales about So-and-so and So-and-so, very ordinary people to look at, but with stories that would make your hair stand on end."

"We have nothing to do with things of that sort. My people have always been straightforward and above board."

"For as much as you know, perhaps; but go back three or four generations and how can you tell? We have all of us ancestors that perhaps were not much to brag of."

Walter caught Underwood's eye as he said this, and perhaps there was a twinkle in it, for he laughed.

"It is something," he said, "to have ancestors at all."

"If they were the greatest blackguards in the world," the captain said with a responsive laugh, "that's what I think. You don't want any more of my revela-

tions? Well, never mind, probably I shall have you coming to me some of these days quite humbly to beg for more information. You are not cut out for an attorney's office. It is very virtuous, of course, to give yourself up to work and turn your back upon life."

"Virtue be hanged," said Walter, with some excitement, "it is not virtue but necessity, which I take to be the very opposite. I know I'm wasting my time, but I mean to turn over a new leaf. And as the first evidence of that as soon as I go home I shall write to old Milnathort."

"Not to-day," said Underwood, looking at his watch; "the post has gone; twenty-four hours more to think about it will do you no harm."

Walter started to his feet, and it was with a real pang that he saw how the opportunity had escaped him, and his intention in spite of himself been balked; a flush of shame came over his face. He felt that, if never before, here was a genuine occasion for blame. To be sure the same thing had happened often enough before, but he had never perhaps so fully intended to do what was required of him. He sat down again with a muttered curse at himself and his own folly. There was nothing to be said for him. He had meant to turn over a new leaf, and yet this day was just like the last. The thought made his heart sick for the moment. But what was the use of making a fuss and betraying himself to a stranger? He sat down again, with a self-disgust which made him glad to escape from his own company. Underwood's talk might be shallow enough, perhaps his pretence at knowledge was not very well founded, but he was safer company than conscience, and that burning and miserable sense of moral impotence which is almost worse than the more tragic stings of conscience. To find out that your resolution is worth nothing, after you have put yourself to the trouble of making it, and that habit is more strong than any motive, is not a pleasant thing to think of. Better let the captain talk about Lord Erradeen, or any other lord in the peerage. Underwood, being encouraged with a few questions, talked very largely on this subject. He gave the young man many pieces of information, which indeed he could have got in Debrett if he had been anxious on the subject; and as the afternoon wore on they strolled out again for another promenade up and down the more populous parts of Sloebury, and there fell in with other idlers like themselves; and when

the twilight yielded to the more cheerful light of the lamps, betook themselves to whist, which was sometimes played in the captain's rooms at that immoral hour. Sloebury, even the most advanced portion of it, had been horrified at the thought of whist before dinner when the captain first suggested it, but that innocent alarm had long since melted away. There was nothing dangerous about it, no stakes which any one could be hurt by losing. When Walter, warned by the breaking up of the party that it was the hour for dinner, took his way home also, he was the winner of a sixpence or two, and no more: there had been nothing wrong in the play. But when he turned the corner of Underwood's street and found himself with the wind in his face on his way home, the revulsion of feeling from something like gaiety to a rush of disagreeable anticipations, a crowd of uncomfortable thoughts, was pitiful. In spite of all our boastings of home and home influence, how many experience this change the moment they turn their face in the direction of that centre where it is conventional to suppose all comfort and shelter is! There is a chill, an abandonment of pleasant sensations, a preparation for those that are not pleasant. Walter foresaw that he would find there with an impatience and resentment which were almost intolerable. Behind the curtain, between the laths of the Venetian blind, his mother would be secretly on the outlook watching for his return; perhaps even she had stolen quietly to the door, and, sheltered in the darkness of the porch, was looking out; or, if not that, the maid who opened the door would look reproachfully at him, and ask if he was going to dress, or if she might serve the dinner at once: it must have been waiting already nearly half an hour. He went on very quickly, but his thoughts lingered and struggled with the strong disinclination that possessed him. How much he would have given not to go home at all! how little pleasure he expected when he got there! His mother most likely would be silent, pale with anger, saying little, while Cousin Sophia would get up a little conversation. She would talk lightly about anything that might have been happening, and Walter would perhaps exert himself to give Sophia back her own, and show his mother that he cared nothing about her displeasure. And then when dinner was over, he would hurry out again, glad to be released. Home! this was what it had come to be; and nothing could mend it

so far as either mother or son could see. Oh, terrible incompatibility, unapproachableness of one soul to another! To think that they should be so near, yet so far away. Even in the case of husband and wife the severance is scarcely so terrible; for they have come towards each other out of different spheres, and if they do not amalgamate, there are many secondary causes that may be blamed, differences of nature and training and thought. But a mother with her child, whom she has brought up, whose first opinions she has implanted, who ought naturally to be influenced by her ways of thinking, and even by prejudices and superstition in favor of her way! It was not, however, this view of the question which moved the young man. It was the fact of his own bondage, the compulsion he was under to return to dinner, to give some partial obedience to the rules of the house, and to confess that he had not written that letter to Mr. Milnathort.

When he came in sight of the house, however, he became aware insensibly, he could scarcely tell how, of some change in its aspect: what was it? It was lighted up in the most unusual way. The window of the spare room was shining not only with candlelight, but with firelight, his own room was lighted up; the door was standing open, throwing out a warm flood of light into the street, and in the centre of this light stood Mrs. Methven with her white shawl over her head, not at all concealing herself, gazing anxiously in the direction from which he was coming.

"I think I will send for him," he heard her say; "he has very likely stepped into Captain Underwood's, and he is apt to meet friends there who will not let him go."

Her voice was soft—there was no blame in it, though she was anxious. She was speaking to some one behind her, a figure in a greatcoat. Walter was in the shadow and invisible. He paused in his surprise to listen.

"I must get away by the last train," he heard the voice of the muffled figure say somewhat pettishly.

"Oh, there is plenty of time for that," cried his mother; and then she gave a little cry of pleasure, and said, "And, at a good moment, here he is!"

He came in somewhat dazzled, and much astonished, into the strong light in the open doorway. Mrs. Methven's countenance was all radiant and glowing with pleasure. She held out her hand to him eagerly.

"We have been looking for you," she cried; "I have had a great surprise. Walter, this is Mr. Milnathort."

Puzzled, startled, and yet somewhat disappointed, Walter paused in the hall, and looked at a tall old man with a face full of crotchets and intelligence, who stood with two greatcoats unbuttoned, and a comforter half unwound from his throat, under the lamp. His features were high and thin, his eyes invisible under their deep sockets.

"Now, you will surely take off your coat, and consent to go up-stairs, and make yourself comfortable," said Mrs. Methven, with a thrill of excitement in her voice. "This is Walter. He has heard of you all his life. Without any reference to the nature of your communication, he must be glad, indeed, to make your acquaintance——"

She gave Walter a look of appeal as she spoke. He was so much surprised that it was with difficulty he found self-possession to murmur a few words of civility. A feeling that Mr. Milnathort must have come to look after that letter which had never been written came in with the most wonderfully confusing, half ludicrous effect into his mind, like one of the inadequate motives and ineffable conclusions of a dream. Mr. Milnathort made a stiff little bow in reply.

"I will remain till the last train. In the mean time the young gentleman had better be informed, Mrs. Methven."

She put out her hands again. "A moment—give us a moment first."

The old lawyer stood still and looked from the mother to the son. Perhaps to his keen eyes it was revealed that it would be well she should have the advantage of any pleasant revelation.

"I will," he said, "madam, avail myself of your kind offer to go up-stairs and unroll myself out of these trappings of a long journey; and in the mean time you will, perhaps, like to tell him the news yourself: he will like it all the better if he hears it from his mother."

Mrs. Methven bowed her head, having, apparently, no words at her command; and stood looking after him till he disappeared on the stairs, following the maid, who had been waiting with a candle lighted in her hand. When he was gone, she seized Walter hurriedly by the arm, and drew him towards the little room, the nearest, which was his ordinary sitting-room. Her hand grasped him with unnecessary force in her excitement. The room was dark—he could not see her

face, the only light in it being the reflection of the lamp outside.

"Oh, Walter!" she cried; "oh, my boy! I don't know how to tell you the news. This useless life is all over for you, and another—oh, how different—another—God grant it happy and great, oh, God grant it! blessed and noble——"

Her voice choked with excitement and fast-coming tears. She drew him towards her into her arms.

"It will take you from me—but what of that, if it makes you happy and good? I have been no guide to you, but God will be your guide: his leadings were all dark to me, but now I see——"

"Mother," he cried, with a strange impulse he could not understand, putting his arm round her, "I did not write that letter: I have done nothing I promised or meant to do. I am sick to the heart to think what a fool and a cad I am—for the love of God tell me what it is!"

CHAPTER IV.

ALL Slobury was aware next morning that something of the most extraordinary character had happened to young Walter Methven. The rumor even reached the club on the same evening. First the report was that he had got a valuable appointment, at which the gentlemen shook their heads; next that he had come into a fortune: they laughed with one accord at this. Then, as upon a sudden gale of wind, there blew into the smoking-room, then full of tobacco, newspapers, and men, a whisper which made everybody turn pale. This was one reason, if not the chief, why that evening was one of the shortest ever known at the club, which did not indeed generally keep very late hours, but still was occupied by its *habitués* till ten or eleven o'clock when the serious members would go away, leaving only the boys, who never could have enough of it. But on that evening even the young men cleared off about ten or so. They wanted to know what it meant. Some of them went round to Captain Underwood's, where Walter was so often to be found, with a confidence that at least Underwood would know; the more respectable members of society went home to their families to spread the news, and half-a-dozen mothers at least went to bed that night with a disagreeable recollection that they had individually and deliberately "broken off" an incipient flirtation or more, in which Walter had been one of the parties concerned. But the hopeful ones said to themselves, "Lizzie has but

to hold up her little finger to bring him back." This was before the whole was known. The young men who had hurried to Captain Underwood's were received by that gentleman with an air of importance and of knowing more than he would tell, which impressed their imaginations deeply. He allowed that he had always known that there was a great deal of property, and perhaps a title concerned, but declared that he was not at liberty to say any more. Thus the minds of all were prepared for a great revelation; and it is safe to say that from one end of Sloebury to the other Walter's name was in everybody's mouth. It had been always believed that the Methvens were people of good connections, and of later years it had been whispered by the benevolent as a reason for Walter's inaction that he had grand relations who at the proper moment would certainly interfere and set everything right for him. Others, however, were strenuous in their denial and ridicule of this, asking, was his mother a woman to conceal any advantages she had? — for they did not understand the kind of pride in which Mrs. Methven was so strong. And then it was clear that not only did the grand relations do nothing for Walter, but he did not even have an invitation from them, and went from home only when his mother went to the seaside. Thus there was great doubt and wonder, and in some quarters an inclination to treat the rumor as a canard, and to postpone belief. At the same time everybody believed it, more or less, at the bottom of their hearts, feeling that a thing so impossible must be true.

But when it burst fully upon the world next morning along with the pale November daylight, but much more startling, that Walter Methven had succeeded as the next heir to his distant cousin, who was the head of the family, and was now Lord Erradeen, a great potentate, with castles in the Highlands and fat lands further south, and moors and deer-forests and everything that heart of man could think of, the town was swept not only by a thrill of wonder, but of emotion. Nobody was indifferent to this extraordinary romance. Some, when they had got over the first bewilderment, received it with delightful anticipations, as if the good fortune which had befallen Walter was in some respects good fortune also for themselves; whereas many others were almost angry at this sudden elevation over their heads of one who certainly did not deserve any better, if indeed half so well

as they did. But nobody was indifferent. It was the greatest excitement that had visited Sloebury for years — even it might be said for generations. Lord Erradeen! it took away everybody's breath.

Among the circle of Walter's more intimate acquaintance, the impression made was still deeper, as may be supposed. The commotion in the mind of the rector, who indeed was old enough to have taken it with more placidity, was such that he hurried in from morning service without taking off his cassock. He was a good Churchman, but not so far gone as to walk about the world in that ecclesiastical garment.

"Can you imagine what has happened?" he said, bursting in upon Mrs. Wynn, who was delicate and did not go to church in the winter mornings. "Young Walter Methven, that you all made such a talk about —"

This was unfair, because she had never made any talk — being a woman who did not talk save most sparingly. She was tempted for a moment to forestall him by telling him she already knew, but her heart failed her, and she only shook her head a little in protest against this calumny, and waited smilingly for what he had to say. She could not take away from him the pleasure of telling this wonderful piece of news.

"Why, it was only the night before last he was here — most of us rather disapproving of him, poor boy," said the rector. "Well, Lydia, that young fellow that was a good-for-nothing, you know — doing nothing, never exerting himself: well, my dear! the most extraordinary thing has happened — the most wonderful piece of good fortune —"

"Don't keep me on tenterhooks, Julius; I have heard some buzzing of talk already."

"I should think you had! the town is full of it; they tell me that everybody you meet on the streets — Lydia!" said the rector with solemnity, drawing close to her to make his announcement more imposing, "that boy is no longer simple Mr. Walter Methven. He is Lord Erradeen —"

"Lord what?" cried the old lady. It was part of her character to be a little deaf, or rather hard of hearing, which is the prettier way of stating the fact. It was supposed by some that this was one of the reasons why when any one was blamed, she always shook her head.

"Lord Er-ra-deen; but bless me, it is not the name that is so wonderful, it is

the fact. Lord Erradeen—a great personage—a man of importance. You don't show any surprise, Lydia! and yet it is the most astonishing incident without comparison that has happened in the parish these hundred years."

"I wonder what his mother is thinking," Mrs. Wynn said.

"If her head is turned nobody could be surprised. Of course, like every other mother, she thinks her son worthy of every exaltation."

"I wish she was of that sort," the old lady said.

"Every woman is of that sort," said the rector with hasty dogmatism; "and, in one way, I am rather sorry, for it will make her feel she was perfectly right in encouraging him, and that would be such a terrible example for others. The young men will all take to idling —"

"But it is not the idling, but the fact that there is a peerage in the family —"

"You can't expect," cried the rector, who was not lucid, "that boys or women either will reason back so far as that. It will be a bad example: and, in the mean time, it is a most astonishing fact. But you don't seem in the least excited. I thought you would have jumped out of your chair—out of the body almost."

"I am too rheumatic for that," said Mrs. Wynn with a smile; then, "I wonder if she will come and tell me," the old lady said.

"I should think she does not know whether she is on her head or her heels," cried the rector; "I don't feel very sure myself. And Walter! What a change, to be sure, for that boy! I hope he will make a good use of it. I hope he will not dart off with Underwood and such fellows and make a fool of himself. Mind, I don't mean that I think so badly of Underwood," he added after a moment, for this was a subject on which, being mollified as previously mentioned, the rector took the male side of the question. Mrs. Wynn received the protest in perfect silence, not even shaking her head.

"But if he took a fancy for horses or that sort of thing," Mr. Wynn added with a moment's hesitation; then he brightened up again—"Of course it is better that he should know somebody who has a little experience in any case; and you will perceive, my dear, there is a great difference between a penniless youth like Walter Methven getting such notions in his head which lead only to ruin, and young Lord Erradeen dabbling a little in amusements which, after all, have no

harm in them if not carried too far, and are natural in his rank—but you women are always prejudiced on such a point."

"I did not say anything, my dear," the old lady said.

"Oh, no, you don't say anything," cried the rector fretfully, "but I see it in every line of your shawl and every frill of your cap. You are just stiff with prejudice so far as Underwood is concerned, who really is not at all a bad fellow when you come to know him, and is always respectful to religion, and shows a right feeling—but one might as well try to fly as to convince you when you have taken a prejudice."

Mrs. Wynn made no protest against this. She said only, "It is a great ordeal for a boy to pass through. I wonder if his mother —" And here she paused, not having yet, perhaps, formulated into words the thoughts that arose in her heart.

"It is to be hoped that she will let him alone," the rector said; "she has indulged him in everything hitherto; but just now, when he is far better left to himself, no doubt she will be wanting to interfere."

"Do you think she has indulged him in everything?" said the old lady; but she did not think it necessary to accuse her husband of prejudice. Perhaps he understood Captain Underwood as much better as she understood Mrs. Methven; so she said nothing more. She was the only individual in Sloebury who had any notion of the struggle in which Walter's mother had wrecked so much of her own peace.

"There cannot be any two opinions on that subject," said the rector. "Poor lad! You will excuse me, my dear, but I am always sorry for a boy left to a woman's training. He is either a mere milksop or a ne'er-do-well. Walter is not a milksop, and here has Providence stepped in in the most wonderful way to save him from being the other; but that is no virtue of hers. You will stand up, of course, for your own side."

The old lady smiled and shook her head. "I think every child is the better for having both its parents, Julius, if that is what you mean."

This was not exactly what he meant, but it took the wind out of the rector's sails. "Yes, it is an ordeal for him," he said, "but, I am sure, if my advice can do him any good, it is at his service; and, though I have been out of the way of many things for some time, yet I dare say the world is very much what it was, and I used to know it well enough."

"He will ask for nobody's advice," said Mrs. Wynn.

"Which makes it all the more desirable he should have it," cried the rector; and then he said, "Bless me! I have got my cassock on still. Tell John to take it down to the vestry—though, by the way, there is a button off, and you might as well have it put on for me, as it is here."

Mrs. Wynn executed the necessary repair of the cassock with her own hands. Though she was rheumatic and did not care to leave her chair oftener than was necessary, she had still the use of her hands, and she had a respect for all the accessories of the clerical profession. She was sitting examining the garment to see if any other feeblenesses were apparent, in which a stitch in time might save after labors, when, with a little eager tap at the door, another visitor came in. This was a young lady of three or four and twenty, with a good deal of the beauty which consists in fresh complexion and pleasant color. Her hair was light brown, warm in tone; her eyes were brown and sparkling; her cheeks and lips bloomed with health. She had a pretty figure, full of life and energy—everything, in short, that is necessary to make up a pretty girl, without any real loveliness or deeper grace. She came in quickly, brimming over, as was evident, with something which burst forth as soon as she had given the old lady the hasty conventional kiss of greeting, and which, as a matter of course, turned out to be the news of which Sloebury was full.

"Did you ever hear anything so wonderful?" she said. "Walter Methven, that nobody thought anything of—and now he is turned into a live lord! a real peer of Parliament! they say. I thought mamma would have fainted when she heard it."

"Why should your mamma faint when she heard of it, July? It is very pleasant news."

"Oh, Aunt Lydia! don't you know why? I am so angry: I feel as if I should never speak to her again. Don't you remember? And I always thought you had some hand in it. Oh, you sit there and look so innocent, but that is because you are so deep."

"Am I deep?" the old lady asked with a smile.

"You are the deepest person I ever knew: you see through us all, and you just throw in a word; and then, when people act upon it, you look so surprised. I heard you myself remark to mamma

how often Walter Methven was at our house."

"Yes, I think I did remark it," Mrs. Wynn said.

"And what was the harm? He liked to come, and he liked me; and I hope you don't think I am the sort of person to forget myself and think too much about a man."

"I thought you were letting him be seen with you too often, July, that is true."

"You thought it might keep others off that were more eligible? Well, that is what I supposed you meant, for I never like to take a bad view. But, you see, there was nobody that was eligible; and here has he turned, all at once, into the very best match within a hundred miles. If mamma had only let things alone, what prospects might be opening upon me now!"

"Half-a-dozen girls, I am afraid, may say just the same," said Mrs. Wynn.

"Well, what does that matter? He had nothing else to do. When a young man has nothing to do he must be making up to somebody. I don't blame him a bit; that is what makes us girls always ready for a flirtation. Time hangs so heavy on our hands. And only think, Aunt Lydia, if things had been allowed to go on (and I could always have thrown him off if anything better turned up) only think what might have happened to me now. I might be working a coronet in all my new handkerchiefs," cried the girl; "only imagine! oh, oh, oh!"

And she pretended to cry; but there was a sparkle of nervous energy all the same in her eyes, as if she were eager for the chase, and scarcely able to restrain her impatience. Mrs. Wynn shook her head at her visitor with a smile.

"You are not so worldly as you give yourself out to be," she said.

"Oh, that just shows how little you know. I am as worldly as ever woman was. I think of nothing but how to establish myself, and have plenty of money. We want it so! Oh, I know you are very good to us—both my uncle and you; but mamma is extravagant, and I am extravagant, and naturally all that anybody thinks of is to have what is necessary and decent for us. We have to put up with it, but I hate what is necessary and decent. I should like to go in satin and lace to-day even if I knew I should be in rags to-morrow; and to think if you had not interfered that I might have blazed in diamonds, and gone to court, and done

everything I want to do! I could strangle you, Aunt Lydia, and mamma too!" Upon which Miss July (or *Julée*, which was how her name was pronounced) gave Mrs. Wynn a sudden kiss and took the cassock out of her hands. "If it wants any mending I will do it," she said; "it will just give me a little consolation for the moment. And you will have time to think and answer this question. Is it too late now?"

"July, dear, it hurts me to hear you talk so—you are not so wild as you take credit for being."

"I am not wild at all, Aunt Lydia," said the girl, appropriating Mrs. Wynn's implements, putting on her thimble, threading her needle, and discovering at one glance the little rent in the cassock which the old lady had been searching for in vain, "except with indignation to think what I have lost—if I have lost it. It is all very well to speak, but what is a poor girl to do? Yes, I know, to make just enough to live on by teaching, or something of that sort; but that is not what I want. I want to be well off. I am so extravagant, and so is mamma. We keep ourselves down, we don't spend money; but we hate it so! I would go through a great many disagreeables if I could only have enough to spend."

"And is Walter one of the disagreeables you would go through?"

"Well no; I could put up with him very well. He is not at all unpleasant. I don't want him, but I could do with him. Do you really think it is too late? Don't you think mamma might call upon Mrs. Methven and say how delighted we are; and just say to him, you know, in a playful way (mamma could manage that very well), 'We cannot hope to see you now in our little house, Lord Erradeen!' and then of course he would be piqued (for he's very generous,) and say, 'Why?' And mamma would say, 'Oh, we are such poor little people, and you are now a great man.' Upon which, as sure as fate, he would be at the cottage the same evening. And then!"—July threw back her head, and expanded her brown eyes with a conscious power and sense of capability, as who should say, "Then it would be in my own hands." "Don't you think that's very good for a plan?" she added, subsiding quickly to the work, which she executed as one to the manner born.

"I don't think anything of it as a plan—and neither do you; and you know your mother would not do it, July," the old lady said.

"Ah," said July, throwing back her head, "there you have hit the blot, Aunt Lydia. Mamma wouldn't do it! She could, you know. When she likes she is the completest humbug!—but not always. And she has so many notions about propriety, and what is womanly, and so forth—just like you. Poor women have no business with such luxuries. I tell her we must be of our time, and all that sort of thing; but she won't see it. No, I am afraid that is just the difficulty. It all depends on mamma—and mamma won't. Well, it is a little satisfaction to have had it all out with you. If you had not interfered, you two, and stopped the poor boy coming——"

At this juncture John threw open the door, and with a voice which he reserved for the great county ladies, announced "Mrs. Methven." John had heard the great news too.

"Stopped the poor boy coming," July said. The words were but half out of her mouth when John opened the door, and it was next to impossible that the new visitor had not heard them. A burning blush covered the girl's face. She sprang to her feet with the cassock in her arms, and gazed at the new comer. Mrs. Methven for the first moment did not notice this third person. She came in with the content and self-absorption of one who has a great wonder to tell. The little world of Sloebury and all its incidents were as nothing to her. She went up to old Mrs. Wynn with a noiseless swiftness.

"I have come to tell you great news," she said.

"Let me look at you," said the old lady. "I have heard, and I scarcely could believe it. Then it is all true?"

"I am sorry I was not the first to tell you. I think such a thing must get into the air. Nobody went out from my house last night, and yet everybody knows. I saw even the people in the street looking at me as I came along. Mrs. Wynn, you always stood up for him; I never said anything, but I know you did. I came first to you. Yes, it is all true."

The old lady had known it now for several hours, and had been gently excited, no more. Now her eyes filled with tears, she could not have told why.

"Dear boy! I hope God will bless him, and make him worthy and great," she said, clasping her old hands together. "He has always been a favorite with me."

"He is a favorite with everybody," said July. No one had noticed her presence, and she was not one that could remain

unseen. "Everybody is glad; there is not one that doesn't wish him well."

Did she intend to strike that *coup* for herself which her mother was not to be trusted to make? Mrs. Wynn thought so with a great tremor, and interrupted her in a tone that for her was hurried and anxious.

"July speaks nothing but the truth, Mrs. Methven; there is nobody that does not like Walter; but I suppose I ought now to drop these familiarities and call him Lord Erradeen?"

"He will never wish his old friends to do that," said Mrs. Methven. She already smiled with a gracious glance and gesture: and the feeling that these old friends were almost too much privileged in being so near to him, and admitted to such signs of friendship, came into her mind; but she did not care to have July share her expansion. "Miss Herbert," she said, with a little bow, "is very good to speak so kindly. But everybody is kind. I did not know my boy was so popular. Sunshine," she added, with a smile, "brings out all the flowers."

She had not sat down, and she evidently did not mean to do so while July remained. There was something grand in her upright carriage, in her air of superiority which had never been apparent before. She had always been a woman, as Sloebury people said, who thought a great deal of herself; but no one had ever acknowledged her right to do so till now. On the other hand, July Herbert was well used to the cold shade. Her mother was Mrs. Wynn's niece, but she was none the less poor for that, and as July was not a girl to be easily put down, she was acquainted with every manner of polite snubbing known in the society of the place. This of standing till she should go was one with which she was perfectly familiar, and in many cases it afforded her pleasure to subject the operator to great personal inconvenience; but on the present occasion she was not disposed to exercise this power. She would have conciliated Walter's mother if she could have done so, and on a rapid survey of the situation she decided that the best plan was to yield.

"I must go and tell mamma the great news," she said. "I am sure she will never rest till she rushes to you with her congratulations; but I will tell her you are tired of congratulations already—for of course it is not a thing upon which there can be two opinions." July laid down the cassock as she spoke. "I have

mended all there is to mend, Aunt Lydia; you need not take any more trouble about it. Good-bye for the moment. You may be sure you will see one or other of us before night."

They watched her silently as she went out of the room; Mrs. Methven saying nothing till the door had closed, Mrs. Wynn with a deprecatory smile upon her face. She did not altogether approve of her grandniece. But neither was she willing to hand her over to blame. The old lady felt the snub July had received more than the girl herself did. She looked a little wistfully after her. She was half angry when as soon as July disappeared Mrs. Methven sank down upon a chair near her, huge billows of black silk rising about her, for she had put on her best gown. Mrs. Wynn thought that the mother, whose child, disapproved by the world, had been thus miraculously lifted above its censures, should have been all the more tolerant of the other who had met no such glorious fate. But she reflected that *they never see it*, which was her favorite expression of wonderment, yet explanation of everything. There were so many things that *they* ought to learn by; but they never saw it. It was thus she accounted with that shake of her head for all the errors of mankind.

Mrs. Methven for her part waited till even the very step of that objectionable Julia Herbert had died away. She had known by instinct that if *that* girl should appear she would be on the watch to make herself agreeable to Walter's mother. "As if he could ever have thought of her," she said to herself. Twenty-four hours before Mrs. Methven would have been glad to think that Walter "thought of" any girl who was at all in his own position. She would have hailed it as a means of steadying him, and making him turn seriously to his life. But everything was now changed, and this interruption had been very disagreeable. She could scarcely turn to her old friend now with the effusion and emotion which had filled her when she came in. She held out her hand and grasped that of the old lady.

"I don't need to tell you what I am feeling," she said. "It is all like a tumultuous sea of wonder and thankfulness. I wanted it, for I was at my wits' end."

Mrs. Wynn was a little chilled too, but she took the younger woman's hand.

"You did not know what was coming," she said. "You wanted one thing, and Providence was preparing another."

"I don't know if that is how to state it;

but at all events I was getting to feel that I could not bear it any longer, and trying for any way of setting things right: when the good came in this superlative way. I feel frightened when I think of it. After we knew last night I could do nothing but cry. It took all the strength from me. You would have thought it was bad news."

"I can understand that." The old lady relinquished the hand which she had been holding. "To be delivered from any anxieties you may have had in such a superlative way, as you say, is not the common lot—most of us have just to fight them out."

Mrs. Methven already felt herself far floated away from those that had to fight it out. The very words filled her heart with an elation beyond speech.

"And this morning," she said, "to wake and to feel that it must be folly, and then to realize that it was true! One knows so well the other sort of waking when the shock and the pang come all over again. But to wake up to this extraordinary incredible well-being—one might say happiness!"

The tears of joy were in her eyes, and in those tears there is something so strange, so rare, that the soul experienced in life looks upon them almost with more awe than upon the familiar ones of grief which we see every day. The old lady melted, and her chill of feeling yielded to a tender warmth. Yet what a pity that they never see it! How much more perfect it would have been if the woman in her happiness had been softened and kind to all those whom nothing had happened to! Imperceptibly the old lady in her tolerant experience shook her gentle old head. Then she gave herself up in full sympathy to hear all the wonderful details.

CHAPTER V.

THE sentiments of the spectators in such a grand alteration of fortune may be interesting enough, and it is in general more easy to get at them than at those which fill the mind of the principal actor. In the present case it is better to say of the principal subject of the change, for Walter could not be said to be an actor at all. The emotions of the first evening it would indeed be impossible to describe. To come in from his small country-town society, to whom even he was so far inferior that every one of them had facilities of getting and spending money which he did not possess, and to sit down, all trembling and guilty, feeling himself the poor-

est creature, opposite to the serious and important personage who came to tell him, with documents as solemn as himself, that this silly youth who had been throwing away his life for nothing, without even the swell of excitement to carry him on, had suddenly become, without deserving it, without doing anything to bring it about, an individual of the first importance—a peer, a proprietor, a great man! Walter could have sobbed as his mother did, had not pride kept him back. When they sat down at table in the little dining-room there were two at least of the party who ate nothing, who sat and gazed at each other across the others with white faces and blazing eyes. Mr. Milnathort made a good dinner, and sat very watchful, making also his observations, full of curiosity and a certain half-professional interest. But Cousin Sophy was the only one who really got the good of this prodigious event. She asked if they might not have some champagne to celebrate the day. She was in high excitement but quite self controlled, and enjoyed it thoroughly. She immediately began in her thoughts to talk of my young cousin Lord Erradeen. It was a delightful advancement which would bring her no advantage, and yet almost pleased her more than so much added on to her income; for Miss Merivale was not of any distinction in her parentage, and suddenly to find herself cousin to a lord went to her heart; it was a great benefit to the solitary lady fond of society, and very eager for a helping hand to aid her up the ascent. And it was she who kept the conversation going. She even flirted a little, quite becomingly, with the old lawyer, who felt her, it was evident, a relief from the high tension of the others, and was amused by the vivacious middle-aged lady, who for the moment had everything her own way. After dinner there was a great deal of explanation given, and a great many facts made clear, but it is to be doubted whether Walter knew very well what was being said. He listened with an air of attention, but it was as if he were listening to some fairy-tale. Something out of the "Arabian Nights" was being repeated before him. He was informed how the different branches of his family had died out one after another. "Captain Methven was aware that he was in the succession," the lawyer said; and Mrs. Methven cast a thought back, half-reproachful, half-approving upon her husband, who had been dead so long that his words and ways were like shadows to her, which she

could but faintly recall. Would it have been better if he had told her? After pursuing this thought a long time she decided that it would not, that he had done wisely — yet felt a little visionary grudge and disappointment to think that he had been able to keep such a secret from her. No doubt it was all for the best. She might have distracted herself with hopes, and worn out her mind with waiting. It was doubtful if the support of knowing what was going to happen would really have done her any good; but yet it seemed a want of trust in her, it seemed even to put her in a partially ridiculous position now, as knowing nothing, not having even an idea of what was coming. But Walter did not share any of these goings back upon the past. He had scarcely known his father, nor was he old enough to have had such a secret confided to him for long after Captain Methven died. He thought nothing of that. He sat with an appearance of the deepest attention, but unaware of what was being said, with a vague elation in his mind, something that seemed to buoy him up above the material earth. He could not bring himself down again. It was what he remembered to have felt when he was a child when some long-promised pleasure was coming — to-morrow. Even in that case hindrances might come in. It might rain to-morrow, or some similar calamity might occur. But rain could not affect this. He sat and listened and did not hear a word.

Next morning Walter awoke very early, before the wintry day had fully dawned. He opened his eyes upon a sort of paling and whitening of everything — a grey perception of the walls about him, and the lines of the window marked upon the paleness outside. What was it that made even these depressing facts exhilarate him and rouse an incipient delight in his mind, which for the moment he did not understand? Then he sat up suddenly in his bed. It was cold, it was dark. There was no assiduous servant to bring hot water or light his fire — everything was chilling and wretched; and he was not given to early rising. Ordinarily it was an affair of some trouble to get him roused, to see that he was in time for a train or for any early occupation. But this morning he found it impossible to lie still; an elasticity in him, an elation and buoyancy, which he almost felt, with a laugh, might float him up to the ceiling, like the mediums, made him jump up, as it were in self-defence. It buoyed him, it carried him as on floating pinions into a

limitless heaven. What was it? Who was he? The chill of the morning brought him a little to himself, and then he sat down in his shirt-sleeves and delivered himself up to the incredible, and laughed low and long, with a sense of the impossibility of it that brought tears to his eyes. He Lord Erradeen, Lord Anything! He a peer, a great man! he with lands and money and wealth of every sort, who last night had been pleased to win two sixpences! After the buoyancy and sensation of rising beyond the world altogether, which was a kind of physical consciousness of something great that had happened before he was awake, came this sense of the ludicrous, this incredulity and confused amusement. He dressed himself in this mood, laughing low from time to time, to himself, as if it were some game which was being played upon him, but of which he was in the secret, and not to be deceived, however artfully it might be managed. But when he was dressed and ready to go down stairs — by which time daylight had fully struggled forth upon a wet and clammy world — he stopped himself short with a sudden reminder that to-day this curious practical joke was to extend its career and become known to the world. He laughed again, but then he grew grave, standing staring at the closed door of his bedroom, out of which he was about to issue — no longer a nobody — in a new character, to meet the remarks, the congratulations of his friends. He knew that the news would fly through the little town like lightning; that people would stop each other in the streets and ask, "Have you heard it? — is it true?" and that throughout the whole place there would be a sort of revolution, a general change of positions, which would confuse the very world. He knew vaguely that whatever else might happen he would be uppermost. The people who had disapproved of him, and treated him *de haut en bas*, would find this to be impossible any longer. He would be in a position which is to be seen on the stage and in books more frequently than in common life — possessed of the power of making retribution, of punishing the wicked, and distributing to the good tokens of his favor. It is a thing we would all like to do, to avenge ourselves (within due Christian and social limits) on the persons who have despised us, and to reward those who have believed in us, showing the one how right they were, and the other how wrong they were, with a logic that should be undeniable. There is nobody who has

ever endured a snub — and who has not? — who would not delight in doing this; but the most of us never get such a supreme gratification, and Walter was to have it. He was going to see everybody abashed and confounded who had ever treated him with contumely. Once more he felt that sensation of buoyancy and elation as if he were spurning earth with his foot and ready to soar into some sort of celestial sphere. And then once more he laughed to himself. Was it possible? could it be? would anybody believe it? He thought there would be an explosion of incredulous laughter through all the streets; but then, when that was over, both friends and foes would be forced to believe it — as he himself was forced to believe.

With that he opened his door, and went down-stairs into the new world. He stumbled over the housemaid's pail, of course, but did not call forth any frown upon that functionary's freckled forehead as he would have done yesterday. On the contrary, she took away the pail, and begged his pardon with awe — being of course entirely blameless. He paused for a moment on the steps as he faced the raw morning air going out, and lo! the early baker, who was having a word with cook at the area over the rolls, turned towards him with a reverential look, and pulled off his cap. These were the first visible signs of Walter's greatness; they gave him a curious sort of conviction that after all the thing was true.

There was scarcely anybody about the Sloebury streets except bakers and milkmen at this hour. It was a leisurely little town, in which nothing particular was doing, no manufactures or business to demand early hours; and the good people did not get up early. Why should they? the day was long enough without that: so that Walter met no one in his early promenade. But before he got back there were symptoms that the particular baker who had taken off his cap had whispered the news to others of his fraternity, who, having no tie of human connection, such as supplying the family with rolls, to justify a salutation, only stared at him with awe-stricken looks as he went past. He felt he was an object of interest even to the policeman going off duty, who being an old soldier, saluted with a certain grandeur as he tramped by. The young man took an aimless stroll through the half-awakened district. The roads were wet, the air raw: it was not a cheerful morning; damp and discouragement breathed

in the air; the little streets looked squalid and featureless in shabby British poverty; lines of low, two-storied brick, all commonplace and monotonous. It was the sort of morning to make you think of the tediousness to which most people get up every day, supposing it to be life, and accepting it as such with the dull content which knows no better; a life made up of scrubbing out of kitchens and sweeping out of parlors, of taking down shutters and putting them up again; all sordid, petty, unbroken by any exhilarating event. But this was not what struck Walter as he floated along in his own wonderful atmosphere, seeing nothing, noting everything with the strange vision of excitement. Afterwards he recollected with extraordinary vividness a man who stood stretching his arms in shirt-sleeves above his head for a long, soul-satisfying yawn, and remembered to have looked up at the shop-window within which he was standing, and read the name of ROBINSON in gilt letters. Robinson, yawning in his shirt-sleeves, against a background of groceries, pallid in the early light, remained with him like a picture for many a day.

When he got back the breakfast table was spread, and his mother taking her place at it. Mr. Milnathort had not gone away as he intended by the night train. He had remained in Mrs. Methven's spare room, surrounded by all the attentions and civilities that a household of women, regarding him with a sort of awe as a miraculous messenger or even creator of good fortune, could show to a bachelor gentleman, somewhat prim and old-fashioned in his habits and ways. It was his intention to leave Sloebury by the eleven o'clock train, and he had arranged that Walter should meet him in Edinburgh within a week, to be made acquainted with several family matters, in which, as the head of the house, it was necessary that he should be fully instructed. Neither Walter nor his mother paid very much attention to these arrangements, nor even remarked that the old lawyer spoke of them with great gravity. Mrs. Methven was busy making tea, and full of anxiety that Mr. Milnathort should breakfast well and largely, after what she had always understood to be the fashion of his country; and as for Walter, he was not in a state of mind to observe particularly any such indications of manner. Cousin Sophia was the only one who remarked the solemnity of his tone and aspect.

"One would suppose there was some

ordeal to go through," she said in her vivacious way.

"A young gentleman who is taking up a large fortune and a great responsibility will have many ordeals to go through, madam," Mr. Milnathort said in his deliberate tones; but he did not smile or take any other notice of her archness. It was settled accordingly, that after a few days for preparation and leave-taking, young Lord Erradeen should leave Sloebury. "And if I might advise, alone," Mr. Milnathort said, "the place is perhaps not just in a condition to receive ladies. I would think it wiser on the whole, madam, if you deferred your coming till his lordship there has settled everything for your reception."

"My coming?" said Mrs. Methven. The last twelve hours had made an extraordinary difference in her feelings and faith; but still she had not forgotten what had gone before, nor the controversies and struggles of the past. "We must leave all that for after consideration," she said.

Walter was about to speak impulsively, but old Milnathort stopped him with a skilful interruption.

"It will perhaps be the wisest way," he said; "there will be many things to arrange. When Lord Erradeen has visited the property, and understands everything about it, then he will be able to —"

Walter heard the name at first with easy unconsciousness: then it suddenly blazed forth upon him as his own name. His mother at the other end of the table felt the thrill of the same sensation. Their eyes met; and all the wonder of this strange new life suddenly gleamed upon them with double force. It is true that the whole condition of their minds was affected by this revelation, that there was nothing about them that was not full of it, and that they were actually at this moment discussing the business connected with it. Still it all came to life now as at the first moment at the sound of this name, Lord Erradeen! Walter could not help laughing to himself over his coffee.

"I can't tell who you mean," he said. "You must wait a little until I realize what Walter Methven has got to do with it."

Mrs. Methven thought that this was making too much of the change. She already wished to believe, or at least to persuade Mr. Milnathort to believe, that she was not so very much surprised after all.

"Lord Erradeen," she said, "is too much amused at present with having got a new name to take the change very seriously."

"He will soon learn the difference, madam," said Mr. Milnathort. "Property is a thing that has always to be taken seriously: and of all property the Erradeen lands. There are many things connected with them that he will have to set his face to in a way that will be far from amusing."

The old lawyer had a very grave countenance — perhaps it was because he was a Scotchman. He worked through his breakfast with a steady routine that filled the ladies with respect. First fish, then kidneys, then a leg of the partridge that had been left from dinner last night; finally he looked about the table with an evident sense of something wanting, and though he declared that it was of no consequence, avowed at last, with some shyness, that it was the marmalade for which he was looking: and there was none in the house! Mr. Milnathort was full of excuses for having made such a suggestion. It was just a Scotch fashion, he declared; it was of no consequence. Mrs. Methven, who held an unconscious conviction that it was somehow owing to him that Walter had become Lord Erradeen, was made quite unhappy by the omission.

"I shall know better another time," she said regretfully. They were all still under the impression more or less that it was his doing. He was not a mere agent to them, but the god, out of the machinery, who had turned darkness into light. He justified this opinion still more fully before he went away, putting into Walter's hand a cheque-book from a London bank, into which a sum of money which seemed to the inexperienced young man inexhaustible, had been paid to his credit. The old gentleman on his side seemed half embarrassed, half impatient after a while by the attention shown him. He resisted when Walter declared his intention of going to the railway to see him off.

"That is just a reversal of our positions," he said.

At this Mrs. Methven became a little anxious, fearing that perhaps Walter's simplicity might be going too far. She gave him a word of warning when the cab drove up for Mr. Milnathort's bag. It was not a very large one, and Walter was quite equal to the condescension of carrying it to the station if his mother had not taken that precaution. She could

not make up her mind that he was able to manage for himself.

"You must remember that after all he is only your man of business," she said, notwithstanding all the worship she had herself been paying to this emissary of fortune. It was a relief to shake hands with him, to see him drive away from the door, leaving behind him such an amazing, such an incalculable change. Somehow it was more easy to realize it when he was no longer there. And this was what Walter felt when he walked away from the railway, having seen with great satisfaction the grizzled head of the old Scotsman nod at him from a window of the departing train. The messenger was gone; the thing which he had brought with him, did that remain? Was it conceivable that it was now fixed and certain, not to be affected by anything that could be done or said? Walter walked steadily enough along the pavement, but he did not think he was doing so. The world around him swam in his eyes once more. He could not make sure that he was walking on solid ground, or mounting up into the air. How different it was from the way in which he had come forth yesterday, idle, half guilty, angry with himself and everybody, yet knowing very well what to do, turning with habitual feet into the way where all the other idlers congregated, knowing whom he should meet and what would happen. He was separated from all that as if by an ocean. He had no longer anything to do with these foolish loungers. His mother had told him a thousand times in often varied tones that they were not companions for him; to-day he recognized the fact with a certain disgust. He felt it more strongly still when he suddenly came across Captain Underwood, coming up eagerly with outstretched hands.

"I hope I am the first to congratulate you, Lord Erradeen," he said. "Now you will know why I asked you yesterday. Was there any news —"

"Now I shall know? I don't a bit; what do you mean? Do you mean me to believe that *you* had any hand in it?" Walter cried, with a tone of mingled incredulity and disdain.

"No hand in it, unless I had helped to put the last poor dear lord out of the way. I could scarcely have had that; but if you mean did I know about it, I certainly did, as you must if you had been a little more in the world."

"Why didn't you tell me then?" said Walter. He added somewhat hotly, with

something of the sublime assumption of youth: "Waiting for a man to die would never have suited me. I much prefer to have been, as you say, out of the world —"

"Oh, Lord! I didn't mean to offend you," said the captain. "Don't get on a high horse. Of course, if you'd known your Debrett as I do, you would have seen the thing plain enough. However, we needn't quarrel about it. I have always said you were my pupil, and I hope I have put you up to a few things that will be of use on your entry into society."

"Have you?" said Walter. He could not think how he had ever for a moment put up with this underbred person. Underwood stood before him with a sort of jaunty rendering of the appeal with which grooms and people about the stable remind a young man of what in his boyish days they have done for him — an appeal which has its natural issue in a sovereign. But he could not give Underwood a sovereign, and it was perhaps just a little ungenerous to turn in the first moment of his prosperity from a man who, from whatever purpose, had been serviceable to him in his poverty. He said, with an attempt to be more friendly: "I know, Underwood, you have been very kind."

"Oh, by Jove! kind isn't the word. I knew you'd want a bit of training; the best thoroughbred that ever stepped wants that; and if I can be of any use to you in the future, I will. I knew old Erradeen; I've known all about the family for generations. There are a great many curious things about it, but I think I can help you through them," said the captain, with a mixture of anxiety and swagger. There had always been something of this same mixture about him, but Walter had never been fully conscious what it was till now.

"Thank you," he said; "perhaps it will be better to let that develop itself in a natural way. I am going to Scotland in a week, and then I shall have it at first hand."

"Then I can tell you beforehand you will find a great many things you won't like," said Underwood abruptly. "It is not for nothing that a family gets up such a reputation. I know two or three of your places. Mulmorrel, and the shooting-box on Loch Etive, and that mysterious old place at Kinloch-houran. I have been at every one of them. It was not everybody, I can tell you, that old Erradeen would have taken to that place. Why, there is a mystery at every corner. There is —"

Walter held up his hand to stay this torrent. He colored high with a curious sentiment of proprietorship and the shrinking of pride from hearing that which was his discussed by strangers. He scarcely knew the names of them, and their histories not at all. He put up his hand: "I would rather find out the mysteries for myself," he said.

"Oh," cried Underwood, "if you are standing on your dignity, my lord, as you like, for that matter. I am not one to thrust my company upon any man if he doesn't like it. I have stood your friend, and I would again; but as for forcing myself upon you now that you've come to your kingdom —"

"Underwood," cried the other, touched in the tenderest point, "if you dare to insinuate that this has changed me, I desire never to speak to you again. But it is only, I suppose, one of the figures of speech that people use when they are angry. I am not such a cad as you make me out. Whether my name is Methven or Erradeen — I don't seem to know very well which it is —"

"It is both," the other cried with a great laugh, and they shook hands, engaging to dine together at the hotel that evening. Underwood, who was knowing in such matters, was to order the dinner, and two or three of "the old set" were to be invited. It would be a farewell to his former comrades, as Walter intended; and with a curious recurrence of his first elation he charged his representative to spare no expense. There was something intoxicating and strange in the very phrase.

As he left Underwood and proceeded along the High Street, where, if he had not waved his hand to them in passing with an air of haste and preoccupation, at least every second person he met would have stopped him to wish him joy, he suddenly encountered July Herbert. She was going home from the vicarage, out of which his mother had politely driven her; and it seemed the most wonderful luck to July to get him to herself, thus wholly unprotected, and with nobody even to see what she was after. She went up to him, not with Underwood's eagerness, but with a pretty, frank pleasure in her face.

"I have heard a fairy-tale," she said, "and is it true —"

"I suppose you mean about me," said Walter. "Yes, I am afraid it is true. I don't exactly know who I am at present."

"Afraid!" cried July. "Ah, you know you don't mean that. At all events, you

are no longer just the old Walter whom we have known all our lives."

There was another girl with her whom Walter knew but slightly, but who justified the plural pronoun.

"On the contrary, I was going to say, when you interrupted me —"

"I am so sorry I interrupted you."

"That though I did not know who I was in the face of the world, I was always the old Walter, etc. A man, I believe, can never lose his Christian name."

"Nor a woman either," said July. "That is the only thing that cannot be taken from us. We are supposed, you know, rather to like the loss of the other one."

"I have heard so," said Walter, who was not unaccustomed to this sort of fencing. "But I suppose it is not true."

"Oh," said July, "if it were for the same reason that makes you change your name, I should not mind. But there is no peerage in our family that I know of, and I should not have any chance if there were, alas! Good-bye, Lord Erradeen. It is a lovely name! And may I always speak to you when I meet you, though you are such a grand personage? We do not hope to see you at the cottage now, but mamma will like to know that you still recognize an old friend."

"I shall come and ask Mrs. Herbert what she thinks of it all," Walter said.

July's brown eyes flashed out with triumph as she laughed and waved her hand to him. She said, —

"It will be too great an honor," and curtsied; then laughed again as she went on, casting a glance at him over her shoulder.

He laughed too; he was young, and he was gratified even by this undisguised provocation, though he could not help saying to himself, with a slight beat of his heart, how near he was to falling in love with that girl! What a good thing it was that he did not — *now!*

As for July she looked at him with a certain ferocity, as if she would have devoured him. To think of all that boy had it in his power to give if he pleased, and to think how little a poor girl could do!

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. METHVEN was conscious of a new revival of the old displeasure when Walter informed her of the engagement he had formed for the evening. She was utterly disappointed. She had thought that the great and beneficial shock of this

new life would turn his character altogether, and convert him into that domestic sovereign, that object of constant reference, criticism, and devotion which every woman would have every man be. It was a wonderful mortification and enlightenment to find that without even the interval of a single evening devoted to the consideration of his new and marvelous prospects, and that talking over which is one of the sweetest parts of a great and happy event, he should return — to what? — to wallowing in the mire, as the Scripture says, to his old billiard-room acquaintances, the idlers and undesirable persons with whom he had formed associations. Could there be anything more unsuitable than Lord Erradeen in the midst of such a party, with Underwood, and perhaps worse than Underwood? It wounded her pride and roused her temper, and, in spite of all her efforts, it was with a lowering brow that she saw him go away. Afterwards, indeed, when she thought of it, as she did for hours together, while Cousin Sophia talked, and she languidly replied, maintaining a conversation from the lips outward, so poor a substitute for the evening's talking over and happy consultation she had dreamed of — Mrs. Methven was more just to her son. She tried always to be just, poor lady. She placed before herself all the reasons for his conduct. That he should entertain the men who, much against her wish and his own good, yet in their way had been kind to, and entertained him, was natural. But to do it this first evening was hard, and she could not easily accept her disappointment. Afterwards she reminded herself with a certain stern philosophy that because Walter had owned a touch of natural emotion, and had drawn near to her and confessed himself in the wrong, that was no reason why his character should be changed in a moment. There were numbers of men who on occasion felt and lamented their misdoing, yet went on again in the same way. He had been no doubt startled, as some are by calamity, by the more extraordinary shock of this good fortune; but why should he for that abandon all the tastes and occupations of his former life? It was she, she said to herself, with some bitterness, who was a fool. The fact was that Walter meant no harm at all, and that it was merely the first impulse of a half scornful liberality, impatience of the old associations, which he had tacitly acknowledged were not fit for him, that led him back to his former companions. He

felt afterwards that it would have been in better taste had he postponed this for a night. But he was very impatient and eager to shake himself free of them, and enter upon his new career.

Something of the same disappointed and disapproving sentiment filled Mrs. Methven's mind when she heard of his visit to the cottage. She knew no reason why he should take a special leave of July Herbert; if he knew himself a reason, which he did not disclose, that was another matter. Thoughts like this embittered the preparations for his departure, which otherwise would have been so agreeable. She had to see after many things which a young man of more wealth, or more independent habits, would have done for himself — his linen, his portmanteau, most of the things he wanted, except the tailor part of the business; but it was not until the last evening that there was any of the confidential consultation, for which her heart had longed. Even on that last day Walter had been very little indoors. He had been busy with a hundred trifles, and she had begun to make up her mind to his going away without a word said as to their future relations, as to whether he meant his mother to share any of the advantages of his new position, or to drop her at Sloebury as something done with, which he did not care to burden himself with, any more than the other circumstances of his past career. She did so little justice to the real generosity of her son's temper in the closeness of her contest with him, and the heat of personal feeling, that she had begun to make up her mind to this, with what pain and bitterness it is unnecessary to say.

She had even begun to make excuses for her own desertion in the tumult of endless thought upon this one subject which possessed her. She would be just; after all, was it not better perhaps that she should be left in the little house which was her independent home, for which she owed nothing to any one? If any unnecessary sense of gratitude made him offer her reluctantly a share in his new life, that would be humiliation indeed. If, as was apparent, her society, her advice, her love were nothing to him, was it not far better that both should recognize the situation, and view things in their true light? This the proud woman had made up her mind to, with what depth of wounded tenderness and embittered affection who could say? She had packed for him with her own hands, for all his permanent arrangements were to be made

after he had left Sloebury, and to change her household in consequence of an alteration of fortune which, according to all appearances, would not concern her, was, she had proudly decided, quite out of the question. She packed for him as in the days when he was going to school, when he was a boy, and liked everything better that had been done by his mother. A woman may be pardoned for feeling such a difference with a passionate soreness and sense of downfall. In those days how she had thought of the time when he would be grown up, when he would understand all her difficulties and share all her cares, and in his own advancement make her triumphant and happy! God forgive me, she said to herself, now he has got advancement far above my hopes, and I am making myself wretched thinking of myself. She stopped and cried a little over his new linen. No, he was right; if it must be allowed that they did not "get on," it was indeed far better in the long run that there should be no false sentiment, no keeping up of an untenable position. Thank God she required nothing; she had enough; she wanted neither luxury nor grandeur, and her home, her natural place was here, where she had lived so many years, where she could disarm all comment upon Walter's neglect of her, by saying that she preferred the place where she had lived so long, and where she had so many friends. Why, indeed, should she change her home at her time of life? No doubt he would come back some time and see her; but after all why should her life be unsettled because his was changed? It was he who showed true sense in his way of judging the matter, she said to herself with a smile, through the hastily dried and momentary tears.

Walter came in when the packing was just about concluded. He came half-way up the stairs and called, "Mother, where are you?" as he had often done when he was a boy and wanted her at every turn, but as he never did now. This touched and weakened her again in her steady resolution to let him see no repining in her. "Are you packing for me?" he called out again; "what a shame while I have been idling! But come down, mother, please, and leave that. You forget we have everything to settle yet."

"What is there to settle?" she said, with a certain sharpness of tone which she could not quite suppress, coming out upon the landing. The maids who were going to bed, and who heard all this,

thought it was beautiful to hear his lordship speaking like that, quite natural to his mother; but that missus was that hard it was no wonder if they didn't get on; and Cousin Sophia from her virgin retirement, where she sat in her dressing-gown reading a French novel, and very much alive to every sound, commented in her own mind, closing her book, in the same sense. "Now she will just go and hold him at arm's length while the boy's heart is melting, and then break her own," Miss Merivale said to herself. Thus everybody was against her and in favor of the fortunate young fellow who had been supping on homage and flattery, and now came in easy and careless to make everything straight at the last moment. Mrs. Methven on her side was very tired, and tremulous with the exertion of packing. It would have been impossible for her to banish that tone out of her voice. She stood in the subdued light upon the stairs looking down upon him, leaning on the banister to support herself; while he, with all the light from below upon his face, ruddy with the night air, and the applauses, and his own high well-being, looked up gaily at her. He had shaken off all his old irritability in the confidence of happiness and good fortune that had taken possession of him. After a moment he came springing up the stairs three at a time.

"You look tired, mother, while I have been wasting my time. Come down, and let us have our talk. I'll do all the rest to-morrow," he said, throwing his arm round her and leading her down-stairs. He brought her some wine first of all and a footstool, and threw himself into the easy task of making her comfortable. "Now," he said, "let's talk it all over," drawing a chair to her side.

All this was quite new upon Walter's part—or rather quite old, belonging to an age which had long ago gone.

"Isn't it rather late for that?" she said, with a faint smile.

"Yes, and I am ashamed of myself; but, unfortunately, you are so used to that. We must settle, however, mother. I am to go first of all to Kinloch-houran, which Milnathort says is not a place for you. Indeed, I hear"—here he paused a little as if he would have named his authority, and continued—"that it is a ruinous sort of place; and why I should go there, I don't know."

"Where did you hear?" she said, with quick suspicion.

"Well, mother, I would rather not have

mentioned his name; but if you wish to know, from Underwood. I know you are prejudiced against him. Yes, it is prejudice, though I don't wonder at it. I care nothing for the fellow; but still it comes out, which is rather strange, that he knows these places, and a good deal about the Erradeens."

"Is that, then," cried the mother quickly, "the reason of his being here?"

"He never said so, nor have I asked him," answered Walter, with something of his old sullenness; but then he added, "The same thought has crossed my own mind, mother, and I shouldn't wonder if it were so."

"Walter," she said, "a man like that can have but one motive—the desire to aggrandize himself. For heaven's sake, don't have anything to do with him; don't let him get an influence over you."

"You must have a very poor opinion of me, mother," he said, in an aggrieved tone.

She looked at him with a curious gaze, silenced, as it seemed. She loved him more than anything in the world, and thought of him above everything; and yet perhaps in that wrath with those we love which works like madness in the brain, it was true what he said—that she had a poor opinion of him. Extremes meet, as the proverb says. However, this was a mystery too deep for Walter to enter into.

"Don't let us waste words about Underwood," he said. "I care nothing for the fellow; he is vulgar and presuming—as you always said."

Partly, no doubt this avowal was made with the intention of pleasing his mother; at the same time it proved the great moral effect of promotion in rank. Lord Erradeen saw with the utmost distinctness what Walter Methven had only glimpsed by intervals. And it is impossible to describe how this speech pleased Mrs. Methven. Her tired eyes began to shine, her heart to return to its brighter hopes.

"The thing is, what arrangements you wish me to make," said Walter. "What are you going to do? I hear Mulmorrel is a handsome house, but it's November, and naturally it is colder in the north. Do you think you would care to go there now, or wait till the weather is better? It may want furnishing, for anything I know; and it appears we've got a little house in town."

"Walter," she said, in a voice which was husky and tremulous, "before you enter upon all this—you must first think, my dear. Are you sure it will be for your

comfort to have me with you at all? Wouldn't you rather be free, and make your own arrangements, and leave me—as I am?"

"MOTHER?" the young man cried. He got up suddenly from where he was sitting beside her, and pushed away his chair, and stood facing her, with a sudden paleness and fiery eyes that seemed to dazzle her. He had almost kicked her footstool out of his way in his excitement and wounded feeling. "Do you mean to say you want to have nothing to do with me?" he said.

"Oh! my boy, you could not think so. I thought that was what—you meant. I wish only what is for your good."

"Would it be for my good to be an unnatural cad?" said the young man, with rising indignation—"a heartless, ill-conditioned whelp, with no sense and no feeling? Oh, mother! mother! what a poor opinion you must have of me!" he cried; and so stung was he with this blow that sudden tears sprang to his eyes. "All because I'm a fool and put everything off to the last moment," he added, in a sort of undertone, as if explaining it to himself. "But I'm not a beast for all that," he said fiercely.

She made him no reply, but sat and gazed at him with a remorse and compunction, which, painful sentiments as they are, were to her sweet as the dews from heaven. Yes, it appeared that through all her passionate and absorbing tenderness she had had a poor opinion of him. She had done him injustice. The conviction was like a new birth. That he should be Lord Erradeen was nothing in comparison of being as he thus proved himself, good and true, open to the influences of affection and nature. She could not speak, but her eyes were full of a thousand things; they asked him mutely to forgive her. They repented, and were abashed and rejoiced all in one glance. The young man who had not been nearly so heartless as she feared, was now not nearly so noble as she thought; but he was greatly touched by the crisis, and by the suggestion of many a miserable hour which was in her involuntary sin against him and in her penitence. He came back again and sat close by her, and kissed her tremulously.

"I have been a cad," he said. "I don't wonder you lost all faith in me, mother."

"Not that, not that," she said faintly; and then there was a moment of exquisite silence, in which without a word, every-

thing was atoned for, and pardon asked and given.

And then began perhaps the happiest hour of Mrs. Methven's life, in which they talked over everything and decided what was to be done. Not to give up the house in Sloebury at present, nor indeed to do anything at present, save wait till he had made his expedition into Scotland and seen his new property, and brought her full particulars. After he had investigated everything and knew exactly the capabilities of the house, and the condition in which it was, and all the necessities and expedencies, they would then decide as to the best thing to be done; whether to go there, though at the worst time of the year, or to go to London, which was an idea that pleased Walter but alarmed his mother. Mrs. Methven did her best to remember what were the duties of a great landed proprietor and to bring them home to her son.

"You ought to spend Christmas at your own place," she said. "There will be charities and hospitalities and the poor people to look after."

She did not know Scotland, nor did she know very well what it was to be a great country magnate. She had been but a poor officer's daughter herself, and had married another officer, and been beaten about from place to place before she settled down on her small income at Sloebury. She had not much more experience than Walter himself had in this respect; indeed if the truth must be told both of them drew their chief information from novels, those much-abused sources of information, in which the life of rural potentates is a favorite subject and not always described with much knowledge. Walter gravely consented to all this, with a conscientious desire to do what was right; but he thought the place would most likely be gloomy for his mother in winter, and that hospitalities would naturally be uncalled for so soon after the death of the old lord.

"What I would advise would be Park Lane," he said, with a judicial tone. "Milnathort said that it was quite a small house."

"What is a small house in Park Lane would look a palace at Sloebury," Mrs. Methven said: "and you must not begin on an extravagant footing, my dear."

"You will let us begin comfortably, I hope," he said; "and I must look for a nice carriage for you, mother."

Walter felt disposed to laugh as he said the words, but carried them off with an

air of easy indifference as if it were the most natural thing in the world: while his mother on her side could have cried for pleasure and tenderness.

"You must not mind me, Walter; we must think what is best for yourself," she said, as proud and pleased as if she had twenty carriages.

"Nothing of the sort," he said. "We are going to be comfortable, and you must have everything that is right first of all."

What an hour it was! now and then there will be given to one individual out of a class full measure of recompense heaped and overflowing, out of which the rest may get a sympathetic pleasure though they do not enjoy it in their own persons. Mrs. Methven had never imagined that this would come to her, but lo! in a moment it was pouring upon her in floods of consolation. So absorbing was this happy consultation that it was only when her eyes suddenly caught the clock on the mantelpiece, and saw that the hands were marking a quarter to two, that Mrs. Methven startled awake out of her bliss.

"My poor boy! that I should keep you up to this hour talking, and a long journey before you to-morrow!" she cried.

She hustled him up to his room after this, talking and resisting gaily to the very door. He was happy too with that sense of happiness conferred, which is always sweet, and especially to youth in the delightful, easy sense of power and beneficence. When he thought of it he was a little remorseful, to think that he had possessed the power so long and never exercised it, for Walter was generous enough to be aware that the house in Park Lane and the carriage were not the occasions of his mother's blessedness. "Poor mother," he said to himself softly. He might have made her a great deal more happy if he had chosen before these fine things were dreamt of. But Mrs. Methven remembered that no more. She begged pardon of God on her knees for misjudging her boy, and for once in her life was profoundly, undoubtingly happy, with a perfection and fulness of content which perhaps could only come after long experience of the reverse. After such a moment a human creature, if possible, should die, so as to taste nothing less sweet: for the less sweet, to be sure, must come back if life goes on, and at that moment there was not a cloud or a suggestion of darkness upon the firmament. She grudged falling asleep, though she was very tired, and so losing this

beautiful hour; but nature is wilful and will seldom abdicate the night for joy, whatever she may do for grief.

Next morning she went to the station with him to see him away. Impossible to describe the devotion of all the officials to Lord Erradeen's comfort on his journey. The station-master kindly came to superintend this august departure, and the porters ran about contending for his luggage with an excitement which made at least one old gentleman threaten to write to the *Times*. There was nothing but "my lord" and "his lordship" to be heard all over the station; and so many persons came to bid him good-bye and see the last of him, as they said, that the platform was quite inconveniently crowded. Among these, of course, was Captain Underwood, whose fervent "God bless you, my boy," drowned all other greetings. He had, however, a disappointed look — as if he had failed in some object. Mrs. Methven, whose faculties were all sharpened by her position, and who felt herself able to exercise a toleration which, in former circumstances, would have been impossible to her, permitted him to overtake her as she left the place, and acknowledged his greeting with more cordiality, or, at least, with a less forbidding civility than usual. And then a wonderful sight was seen in Sloebury. This *bête noir* of the feminine world, this man, whom every lady frowned upon, was seen walking along the High Street, side by side, in earnest conversation with one of the women who had been most unfavorable to him. Was she listening to an explanation, a justification, an account of himself, such as he had not yet given, to satisfy the requirements of the respectability of Sloebury? To tell the truth, Mrs. Methven now cared very little for any such explanation. She did not remember, as she ought to have done, that other women's sons might be in danger from this suspicious person, though her own was now delivered out of his power. But she was very curious to know what anybody could tell her of Walter's new possessions, and of the family which it was rather humiliating to know so little about. It was she, indeed, who had begun the conversation after his first remark upon Walter's departure and the loss which would result to Sloebury.

"You know something about the Erradeens, my son tells me," she said almost graciously.

"Something! I know about as much as most people. I knew he was the heir,

which few, except yourselves, did," the captain said. He cast a keen glance at her when he said "except yourselves."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Methven, "that is scarcely correct, for Walter did not know, and I had forgotten. I had, indeed, lost sight of my husband's family, and the succession seemed so far off."

It was thus that she veiled her ignorance and endeavored to make it appear that indifference on her part, and a wise desire to keep Walter's mind unaffected by such a dazzling possibility, had been her guiding influence. She spoke with such modest gravity that Captain Underwood, not used to delusion under that form, was tempted into a sort of belief. He looked at her curiously, but her veil was down, and her artifice, if it was an artifice, was of a kind more delicate than any to which he was accustomed.

"Well!" he said, "then it was not such a surprise to you as people thought? Sloebury has talked of nothing else, I need not tell you, for several days; and everybody was of opinion that it burst upon you like a thunderbolt."

"Upon my son, yes," Mrs. Methven said with a smile.

He looked at her again, and she had the satisfaction of perceiving that this experienced man of the world was taken in.

"Well, then," he said, "you will join with me in wishing him well out of it: you know all the stories that are about."

"I have never been at Mulmorrel — my husband's chances in his own lifetime were very small, you know."

"It isn't Mulmorrel, it is that little ruined place where something uncanny is always said to go on — oh, I don't know what it is; nobody does but the reigning sovereign himself, and some hangers-on, I suppose. I have been there. I've seen the mysterious light, you know. Nobody can ever tell what window it shows at, or if it is any window at all. I was once with the late man — the late lord, he who died the other day — when it came out suddenly. We were shooting wildfowl, and his gun fell out of his hands. I never saw a man in such a funk. We were a bit late, and twilight had come on before we knew."

"So then you actually saw something of it yourself?" Mrs. Methven said. She had not the remotest idea what this was, but if she could find out something by any means she was eager enough to take advantage of it.

"No more than that; but I can tell you

this: Erradeen was not seen again for twenty-four hours. Whether it was a call to him or what it was I can't undertake to say. He never would stand any questioning about it. He was a good fellow enough, but he never would put up with anything on that point. So I can only wish Walter well through it, Mrs. Methven. In my opinion he should have had some one with him; for he is young, and, I dare say, he is fanciful."

"My son, Lord Erradeen," said Mrs. Methven with dignity, "is man enough, I hope, to meet an emergency. Perhaps you think him younger than he is." She propounded this delicately as, perhaps, a sort of excuse for the presumption of the Christian name.

Underwood grew very red: he was disappointed and irritable. "Oh, of course, you know best," he said. "As for my Lord Erradeen (I am sure I beg your pardon for forgetting his dignity), I dare say he is quite old enough to take care of himself—at least, we'll hope so; but a business of that kind will upset the steadiest brain, you know. Old Erradeen had not a bad spirit of his own, and *he* farked it. I confess I feel a little anxious for your boy; he's a nice fellow, but he's nervous. I was in a dozen minds to go up with him to stand by him; but, perhaps, it is better not, for the best motives get misconstrued in this world. I can only wish him well out of it." Captain Underwood said, taking off his hat and making her a fine bow as he stalked away.

It is needless to say that this mysterious intimation of danger planted daggers in Mrs. Methven's heart. She stopped aghast: and for the moment the idea of running back to the station, and signalling that the train was to be stopped came into her mind. Ridiculous folly! Wish him well out of it? What, out of his great fortune, his peerage, his elevation in the world? Mrs. Methven smiled indignantly, and thought of the strange manifestations under which envy shows itself. But she went home somewhat pale, and could not dismiss it from her mind as she wished to do. Well out of it! And there were moments when, she remembered, she had surprised a very serious look on the countenance of Mr. Milnathort. Was Walter going unwarned, in the elation and happy confidence of his heart, into some danger unknown and unforeseen? This took her confidence away from her, and made her nervous and anxious. But after all, what folly it must be: something uncanny and a mysterious light! These were stories

for Christmas, to bring a laugh or a shiver from idle circles round the fire. To imagine that they could affect anything in real life was a kind of madness; an old-fashioned, exploded superstition. It was too ridiculous to be worthy a thought.

From Temple Bar.

SCENES DURING THE WINTER OF 1794-5.

IN the summer of 1794, when all Europe was in a state of commotion and agitation, two young Englishmen were quietly amusing themselves by visiting all the private and public collections of ornithology in Holland, for the purpose of obtaining water-color drawings of such birds as had not hitherto been named or described.

After a highly successful and interesting tour, they had reached the Hague, and were studying the pictures in the Stadtholder's galleries, when a sudden stop was put to their peaceful occupations, by the appointment of the elder of the two, Captain Woodford of the Guards, to be commissary-general and inspector-in-chief of the so-called "Emigrant Corps," which, though containing but few actual soldiers, had been taken into the English service out of charity and as the best means of providing for some of the unfortunate French emigrant nobility. Captain Woodford, on accepting this appointment, asked his friend Ramsay Richard Reinagle, afterwards a well-known artist, to remain with him as his private secretary; and it is from the papers of the latter, who was then a very young man, that the following account of the terrible winter of 1794-5 has been compiled.

It will be remembered that the National Convention of France had declared war against both George III. and the Stadtholder, and that a body of English and Hanoverian troops under command of the king's son, the Duke of York, had been despatched to Holland for the protection of the country. The French, under General Pichegru, far outnumbered them, however, and the duke had been obliged to retire first behind the Meuse and then along the Waal to Nimeguen, closely followed by the enemy, who encamped in great force in the environs of the town.

Just at this time, early in October, Captain Woodford and his secretary, who were on their way to Dusseldorf, halted for nine days at Nimeguen, and we have

the following description of the scene the place presented:—

Before reaching the bridge of boats thrown across the Rhine by order of the Duke of York, we saw, stationed on the banks of the river, all the heavy baggage of the army, likewise a mass of Hanoverians encamped. This portion of the army and baggage-wagons extended more than a mile.

The bustle of troops, foot and horse, Hulus, Hussars, pioneers, camp-followers, baggage-wagons, munitions of war, wagons with forage of all kinds, cannon, artillery-wagons, strangers, and the agonized townspeople—would baffle the pen of any one to fully describe. Drum-beating, bugle-blowing, trumpet-calls, hallooing, roaring, screaming, disputing, fighting, knocking down every overturnable thing day and night, did really fill us with ample notions of war and its more serious and approaching consequences.

All the ornamental trees on both sides of each road leading to and from the city were cut down and laid across the said roads, as barricades to the advance of the French. The enemy were so near us that if any one went on the ramparts he was sure to be fired at. I was mortified at being forbidden by Captain Woodford to attempt such a thing. I feared nothing.

I observed that, go into whatever house I would, the people were drinking tea day and night; their teapots being always close to their turf fires. Bread and butter sliced was in constant readiness; so too were *butter-rams*, a sandwich made of buttered bread, a thin slice of dark rye-bread, and a thin slice of the best cheese.

All was honesty; no bargaining required. The prince, the duke, and the poor man, all paid alike.

The passing through the town day and night of wagons filled with various stores, on their way to the military bridge, occasioned prodigious noises of all descriptions. Many heavy pieces of artillery, each drawn by ten horses, passed through with caissons and ammunition-wagons, leaving about five or six regiments in the entrenched camp.

Day and night, this scene of the passing and repassing of every military requisite continued, impressing the mind of the uninitiated with the desperate character of war. Troops, horses and men filled all the streets. The latter were converted into roofless stables. We observed multitudes of horses haltered, and left six and eight hours unattended to. The neighing of these hundreds of animals, apparently calling for food, added new noises to those described; and, with the dexterous cracking of long-thonged whips and the occasional firing of muskets for sport, made such a combination as can never be adequately described in words.

The French were within two musket-shots of the place and kept up a perpetual fire.

A gale of wind and drizzling rain prevented

my sketching the mingled groups of wagons and soldiers. The wagons, groups of horses of all colors, etc., reminded us of Wouverman's beautiful military pictures. On the dyke or road above, there were light horse, foot-soldiers, horses, horses of all sorts roped to the wagons, some of which were in motion, others stationary; and all these various objects seen beneath a stormy sky, made the finest sight an artist could behold!

But the weather and the fear of being taken for a spy compelled the artist, much against his will, to refrain from making any use of these picturesque materials.

Captain Woodford left Nimeguen about the middle of October, and in less than three weeks after it was in the hands of the French. Meanwhile the latter had entered Cologne on the 6th; Juliers had already surrendered and was followed by Venlo, Nuys, Bonn, Coblenz, Worms, etc., so that it was no longer possible for reinforcements to arrive from Germany. In ignorance of this, however, the commissary proceeded on his way; and, writes Mr. Reinagle:—

As we slowly progressed, our feelings were harrowed to witness on both sides, and in the middle of the road, multitudes of French emigrants, literally up to their knees in bitter cold mud, carrying their knapsacks and large bundles on their backs—people of all grades, high and low, among whom was the Duc de Mortemart with his officers and a few men retreating or flying from Dusseldorf!

These miserable emigrants informed us that so successful were the *sans-culottes* that they fired the fortress in five places at once, burnt part of the palace, and drove out all who could walk or procure horses; from which perpetual wearing of the roads, they ceased to have any appearance of such, but were vast mud-pools. These fugitives fled from Cleves, Bonn, Cologne, and other towns.

When we arrived at our next station, there was a woman who was very kind to us, an event quite remarkable and deserving of note, for we found no feelings of humanity anywhere. Men and women were alike brutalized.

Troops were scattered all along the roads we travelled on, creeping at a slow foot-pace. The weather and the mud roads were alike unequalled. Our horses were so bespattered that they and the roads were of the same color, postillions the same. The emigrants were in swarms, numbers filling every hole, eating everything digestible. We arrived in Wesel, a Prussian fortress, and a detestable, dirty and miserable rat-hole we found it. Here we got, however, a supper and pretty fair wine, also beds, which we enjoyed prodigiously, having lived in our carriages, sleeping in them when the inns were crammed. Finding it inadvisable to continue our journey, on the next day we turned our horses' heads; for indeed we could

go no farther on account of the bombardment of Dusseldorf. The emigration from so many places at once, and the dispersion of the officers whom we were going to meet, absolutely occasioned the most precipitate retreat; as these unfortunate French people were refused at every door every kind of shelter or covering from the weather, nor could money tempt these brutish wretches of the country to give them lodging.

Mr. Reinagle goes on to say that it was impossible fully to describe the harrowing scenes he witnessed, or the indignation he felt at seeing ladies of quality plunging knee-deep through filthy slush, with bundles under their arms; for the carts, wagons, coaches at their disposal were nothing like enough to hold them all; while worse still, no one could insure them the smallest protection; they were refused shelter everywhere, and were hated and despised by their imagined friends, the Prussian princes, nobles and others. And yet, amid all this incredible misery and sorrow, these unhappy creatures were apparently cheerful and defied all manner of hardships and privations, aggravated as these were by the altogether unprecedented weather. The month of November was very variable, there being now heavy falls of snow and intervals of intense cold and then sudden thaws, but the frost did not regularly set in until December.

Captain Woodford returned to Utrecht, and while there Mr. Reinagle thought he would take a sketch of the "old, decayed, insignificant towers of the so-called fortifications of the city."

Snow had fallen to a depth of five inches, and while the artist was intent on sharpening his black chalk, a Dutch soldier, armed, came noiselessly up behind him and, suddenly tapping him on the shoulder, ordered him to follow him to the guard-house, which was about a mile off. Arrived there, the sentinel announced that a spy had been taken in the very act of making drawings of the fortifications.

I was shoved into the presence of the officer on duty, three or four others sitting listlessly by, and seeming quite indifferent to what was going on.

The officer took the initiative, and began by bestowing praise on the soldier for the laudable act of duty he had performed. He then inquired, (all in Dutch, which I understood) where I had been detected in the rascally act.

These words made me smile and bow. I stood, of course.

The dignity of Mynheer the Lieutenant seemed to rise as he proceeded, and having

heard the long rigmarole story of the soldier, which was most amusing to me, he began by asking in Dutch, what country I belonged to, my business or profession.

I replied in French, telling him that I had not the honor of being able to speak Dutch, but that I understood every word.

"You *ought* to speak it," said he; "don't you hear *me* speak?"

"Yes," I replied, "but, captain, that does not enable me to follow the example."

"Why," he said, "spies can speak ever so many languages. Where did I live?"

"In the mansion of Count Bentinck."

"Impossible. Do you, fellow, speak my language, and don't bother me with your French, for I can't well understand all you say."

So we went on for an hour, he thundering his Dutch, I parrying in French. Then he appealed to the idle officers and consulted them; but they said they could not interfere, he must act on his own responsibility and according to his instructions.

"Oh! ah! yes! I know *that*," Then addressing the soldier, he went on:—

"I tell you what, Soldaten, take good care not to bring me fellows who can't speak Dutch. Take care you learn that *first*, and don't bother me to examine people whom I can't understand. Here, Mr. Artist, as you can't speak Dutch and I can't French, you may go about your business."

"Well then," I said, "I shall return and try to do what your soldier prevented me from doing."

I was not forbidden, and left the officer with a bow, he calling after me, "Mind, I shall make inquiries about you and your statement about Count Bentinck, and woe betide you if it is false."

"We are so close to his house," I said, "I wonder you did not despatch a military messenger thither; it would have spared much loss of time and all this questioning and answering of one another in two languages, one of which you could barely understand."

"Well, that's true; so you may go," and away I went through the snow.

Captain Woodford had intended to remain a month in Utrecht, but the approach of the French advanced guard soon put him to flight, and he had to depart in haste, having but one day in which to pack and be off.

By this time the winter had set in with bitter severity, and heavy falls of snow impeded their flight. Several splendid horses, worth £80 a piece, were purchased for sums varying from £15 to £20; four fine black ones for Captain Woodford's carriage—two for the curricie driven by his secretary, and four for the Hussar and three servants who attended them—so the train was a conspicuous one. Their route lay east in the direc-

tion of Deventer, and their usual pace was one mile an hour over sandy roads, rendered still more heavy by the deep snow. The flatness and dreariness were intolerable; all was heath and sand, and neither man nor beast, tree, house, or even bush appeared to break the intense monotony of the scene. Perhaps it was to relieve this monotony that before reaching the village of Loo, they turned out of their way to visit the palace of William III., an ancient edifice, which had been maintained in every particular as he left it. From the palace they went to the menagerie, where Mr. Reinagle seems to have been extremely impressed by the sight of two elephants, animals which were apparently quite new to him, for he describes with great admiration the wonderful strength and dexterity of their trunks, and naively remarks: "The keeper told the male to roar. He did so, and it was so terribly loud, that I felt frightened. I was then twenty years of age."

The frost had now been for some weeks so awfully severe that when the sun shone the air glittered like minute diamonds. There were fifty degrees of frost, and the ice was three or four feet thick. Some little time previously, the Dutch government had ordered the dykes to be cut; but the flood of water was speedily converted into a sheet of ice, which offered little or no hindrance to the advance of the enemy. The latter had contrived an ingenious device by which to cross the river Leek. Bundles of straw were tied close together with strong ropes, until they formed a straw platform thirty or forty yards wide, which was firmly attached to either bank, the river being at that time passable by boat. In one night the water froze over the straw, and in a few days a bridge of ice was formed, strong enough to allow the safe passage of troops, wagons and horses. In a week the first artillery were able to cross, and in two or three more days the river ice was a foot thick and growing every night thicker and thicker.

While the party remained at Loo, Mr. Reinagle visited the menagerie daily, and skated on the ornamental water, where the ice was three feet thick and of a very dark black green. He had great difficulty in keeping himself warm enough even to put on his skates, and noticed that all the birds, Indian pigeons, silver pheasants, etc., had their legs "frozen, swollen, and burst," and must have been suffering intensely.

Captain Woodford was at this time making every endeavor to find some safe asylum for the unhappy "Emigrant Corps," and had applied to all the petty principalities in the north of Germany — Darmstadt, Detmold, Philipstadt, Paderborn, etc. — but in vain, not one would listen to his entreaties. At last he had the good fortune to meet with a M. Devaux, a Fleming, and after some time spent in negotiations as to terms, etc., this gentleman undertook to persuade the Prince of Waldeck to allow the worn-out wanderers to take refuge in Pyrmont, and promised to discount bills, and provide lodgings, horses, baggage-wagons, forage and all other necessities. This good news brought relief and joy to multitudes, for fear and hatred had closed every heart and door against them; the Dutch hated the English with all their hearts, and not, it is to be feared, without serious cause. It happened that while a body of our troops were at Arnheim, a Dutch soldier fired at a young drummer who had wandered to the edge of the river, and killed him on the spot.

"Our men were so fired with rage that no opportunity was lost for a row. Farm-houses, ricks of grain, hay, clover, etc., were to be seen blazing night after night, and many a secret murder was committed on both sides."

Moreover the Dutch, though greatly divided, were for the most part favorable to the French, who announced that they waged war not against peoples, but governments; and Friesland had agreed to terms of peace and unity with the Stadtholder's enemies as early as the middle of October. Such adherents as he had were yet further discouraged by the return of the Duke of York to England at the beginning of December, and he himself was obliged to fly from the Hague soon after, escaping to Harwich in an open boat on the 19th of January.

Meanwhile the French had crossed the river Waal in the middle of December, but had been gallantly driven back by General Dundas and his eight thousand men a fortnight later. General Pichegru, however, speedily assembled a force of two hundred thousand men, who crossed the Waal again in such numbers on January 4, that the English had no alternative but to beat a hasty retreat.

Prince Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, afterwards king of Hanover, then three-and-twenty years of age, commanded the rear-guard.

The sufferings of the troops were some-

thing appalling; for though thousands of their countrywomen at home had been busy making up loose cloaks, coats, trousers and waistcoats of flannel, the prince assured Captain Woodford with great concern that not a single article had ever reached the army. Moreover, the English had a concealed enemy in every town and village; no one was willing to do them any service and, "Nothing for the Englishman" was the general cry.

It must have been after the fearful night of the 16th of January, when such numbers perished, that Prince Ernest reached the captain's cottage at Loo.

He came in to us half frozen, clothed all over in thick flannel, praying for a cup of hot tea. He was so buttoned up, we were not aware of the dignity of our frozen, half-starved visitor. As the tea was preparing, he told us he had lost his way on Deventer Common, that prodigious waste, and had been seventeen hours on horseback, neither he nor his horse having had any sort of refreshment. He told us that when daylight appeared he beheld a most heart-breaking sight, 800 men, women, and children frozen to death, and covering the snow two or three feet deep. The following night, 900 lives were lost in the same way. No route had been given to the retreating army. Few officers were with them; the men were led by sergeants only; all they knew was that they were to fly eastward. No man of the army or commissariat knew of Deventer Common.

The prince gradually unfastened his coats, when we discovered a British star on his breast, and our soldiers hinted who our guest was. Soon after his arrival, the troops came crowding up to our cottage. So exhausted were the women and children, so famished, so cold, that, what with them and the men of all sorts calling to each other, women weeping and imploring for food and tea, few, if any, scenes could surpass it. Orders had been given to our Hussar and valet to scour the scattered village and buy all the tobacco-pipes to be had, and all the tobacco, which cost the captain £20.

Others of our men hauled by ropes several loose trunks of trees and made a vast pile, with heaps of faggots, straw, etc., and shortly a blazing fire was made and soon surrounded. A distribution was made of the pipes and tobacco, which to numbers was equal to food.

Hussars and Hulans marched past us, their horses' noses all frozen, and long icicles hanging from their chins. Every trooper had his whiskers and moustachios frozen thick from their breath.

Suddenly a violent scream of joy was uttered by a soldier's wife, who had an infant in her arms. A son of hers, one of our drummers, supposed to have been shot three weeks before, had wandered with the flying soldiers, and stood at our door.

What with the sound of lamentations, the greetings of friends who had supposed each other shot or frozen to death, the shouts of inquiry for this or that troop, etc., etc., the scene was altogether simply indescribable.

None of our men, not one, I truthfully declare, had a great-coat. Many had a worn-out blanket skewered across their shoulders. I saw not one man with whole shoes; all had scarcely a shoe left; numbers had their toes frozen off, numbers their noses; exhaustion was universal. The march continued all day and all night, for three days, every creature asking in what direction stood the town of Deventer.

Our valet and the Hussar-courier were sent the next day to Deventer for provisions, and on their arrival found all the bakers' shops closed, as well as most others, from the dread of pillage. The soldiers roared out to the bakers that if they refused any longer to furnish them bread, they would set fire to their houses. From the windows the alarmed bakers promised to have a large batch ready by midday. The hurly-burly in the streets was terrific. Twelve o'clock came; the doors were opened, when a furious rush was made to seize the hot bread and devour it. Those who were in could not get out for the rush and pressure outside. Confusion indescribable followed. Those who got the bread devoured it voraciously, and many, very many, soon died in consequence.

To clear the way and open a passage, bread was thrown out, which caused a riotous scramble. In a few minutes all the bread was carried off, and the bakers, to save pillage, engaged to make more as fast as it was possible.

It was about this time, or perhaps rather earlier, that the young artist was despatched alone to Amsterdam, probably on some business connected with the "Emigrant Corps."

He travelled by the canal, the ice of which, though broken by the frequent passage of barges, had been frozen together again, and was now tossed and piled up in the most fantastic manner possible.

The noise made by the barge in which he travelled was most terrific, as it crashed through the ice, and resembled "ten thousand roaring claps of thunder all at once, with now and then a roar of cannon."

This noise continued all the way, and as it grew dark the barge came more frequently in collision with huge masses of ice, which seemed to threaten instant destruction.

Reaching Amsterdam after nine hours' travelling, he set out in search of the hotel or tavern to which he was instructed to go, and after running about all over the city for two hours, found it. Though situated in one of the principal streets, it

seemed that "no one had ever heard of it."

The sun shone brightly the next morning, and Mr. Reinagle was out early and went down to the canal, where his attention was arrested by a very shocking spectacle. A poor old woman had missed her way in the darkness, and had fallen over the edge of the street into the canal.

At that time it was the law in Amsterdam that when any case of drowning was discovered, the person who first found the body should tie a rope round one of the wrists and raise it half out of the water, as close to the parapet as possible. Having tied the rope to the nearest tree or pile, he was immediately to go to the hospital and give information; then the authorities would send for the unfortunate person, who would be taken to the infirmary, and the informer would receive a rix-dollar (about 4s. 4d.). If the body should be claimed by relations or friends, it would be given up to them on payment of twelve guilders (about a guinea).

No one dared take the drowned person out of the canal until the hospital authorities had been communicated with, unless it was evident that life was not extinct.

In that case any one might act, and the owners of the nearest hotel were obliged instantly to warm a bed, in a room with a fire, and keep the body warm until the arrival of the nearest surgeon, who was bound to come with all possible speed and do his utmost to restore animation. Such were the police regulations ninety years ago; and accordingly when Mr. Reinagle saw the poor woman mentioned above, she was tied by the arm to a tree, the person who had found her being gone to give information.

On his return journey, Mr. Reinagle travelled by land in a post-chariot, so called, which was "nothing so good as a light wagon—one of the most infernal machines ever made by man; and the very best to overturn his senses." He had hired "what was called the roof or best seat," which exposed the passenger to all the inclemency of the weather except downright rain, against which the tarpaulin covering offered some protection. "The day was cloudless, the air all glittering;" and they travelled against the wind, which seemed to extract every particle of heat from their bodies. The carriage was open at both ends, and the wind whistled round them fiercely. "All was loose and rattling, as if no one part" of the vehicle were firmly joined to another. Under the wooden axle were fas-

tened two hollow brass pans of large size, like cymbals, the noise of which, added to all the rest, seems to have driven the unfortunate artist well-nigh distracted, and completely baffled all his powers of description.

He was told that these brass pans were only allowed to "posting-wagons," and were intended to warn other travellers of their approach, and he writes:—

I feel sure that we inside could not have heard a cannon had it been fired close to us; and so this maddening mass of noises continued all night.

I who was in vigorous health and naturally strong, was so weakened and made so feeble that I literally could not walk; such were the effects of jolting, twisting, turning, together with the intensely cold wind whirling round my head. My inside was so shaken, that I was in severe pain, had violent headache, and was so feeble that when seated in a chair I was quite unable to rise again.

Matters being now arranged with the Prince of Waldeck, the travellers once more set out on their terrible journey.

"Here," says Mr. Reinagle, "was an English army sent to protect Holland which never waited to be fired on. No wonder we were despised, scoffed at, and scouted."*

These unfortunate, ragged troops, not a man of whom had a great-coat, had to march in the teeth of a furious northeasterly gale, which made the cold more intense, and whirled the dry, powdery snow and sand aloft in dense clouds, sweeping the ground almost bare in some places, and piling up drifts from ten to twenty feet deep in others. Snow fell for several days together, or rather hardly seemed to *fall* at all, owing to the fierceness of the wind, though the air was filled with it. Women and children were screaming from the intense cold and want of food, and the miserable troops, after halt-

* This is hardly a correct statement. As mentioned above, General Dundas drove the French back across the Waal on December 30th. Pichegru with seventy thousand men attacked the English forces between Nimeguen and Arnhem early in January, and as the latter were greatly outnumbered, they had no alternative but to retreat, which they did on the 14th. They reached Deventer on the 27th, having, with the utmost courage and perseverance, succeeded in conveying thither all the ammunition, artillery, and military stores, which, as it was impossible to carry them farther, were then destroyed to save them from falling into the hands of the enemy. The retreating army was pursued at all speed by fifty thousand of the French, who hoped to compel it to surrender. After a two months' march, during which the men were frequently up to the middle in ice, snow, mud, and water, Bremen was reached at the end of March, and the unfortunate troops were received and entertained with the utmost kindness by the inhabitants, whose conduct formed a marked contrast with that of the Dutch.

ing for a few hours, were obliged to move on without their rations, to make room for those who followed.

Some officers, who were acquainted with Captain Woodford and came to his quarters one morning, half starved and nearly frozen to death, to ask for some breakfast, reported that they had passed hundreds of men on the way, who had lain down on the snow from sheer inability to proceed any farther, and had there perished. It was, they said, like a bloody field of battle—dead men lying on all sides and also women and children.

M. Devaux's "genius overcame all obstacles," we are told; but notwithstanding his energy and ability, dire perplexity prevailed at times; orders and counter-orders were received, and no one knew what to do.

M. Moreau de Beauregard, one of Captain Woodford's secretaries, "a capital, cheerful-spirited Frenchman," chose to walk, in order to avoid the confusion which attended the departure from Deventer, owing to some misunderstanding which obliged the rest of the party to retrace their steps once or twice.

Six miles beyond Deventer, it was agreed that the commissary's party should halt at two small cottages, where, however, they soon found that the people were unwilling to admit them, or help them in any way. The cook produced his provisions, but both bread and meat were frozen solid, and had to be chopped with an axe, so that nothing could be done with either until they were thawed, which was not for an hour or two. Fortunately for themselves, they carried provisions with them, as well as all sorts of cooking utensils, tea-kettles, mugs, jugs, butter and cheese, for they did not expect to find anything, it seems, in "miserable Westphalia." There being no beds, they slept on the floor in their clothes; but the peasants, who had admitted them quite against their will, had in the mean time climbed up to the chimney outside and stuffed it up with hay or straw, and had also quietly fastened the door of the room occupied by Captain Woodford's party, all of whom but Mr. Reinagle were sound asleep, and, but for his vigilance, must have been suffocated. It was impossible to get out of their prison; but by dint of great effort, they succeeded in wrenching open a window, and the smoke slowly escaped, but the cold wind came

* Their anticipations were so far realized that Mr. Reinagle searched one town all over for a *tooth-brush*, but in vain; such an article was unknown.

in, and they dared not extinguish the fire; so in this plight they had to remain till morning, when a party of soldiers arrived, set them at liberty, and removed the straw. Not one of the peasants was to be seen; but in the chimney were found nearly twenty hams and plenty of beef, which the starving troops did not suffer to remain there long.

The sun shone in full splendor as the train once more started, but the air was thick with drifting snow, fine and dry as dust. The troops followed in crowds, and what with men, horses, baggage-wagons, forage-wagons, etc., it was difficult to find a passage; where the wind had swept away the snow, the road was all ice. Artillery now choked the way; and the cook's heavy wagon, which was like a little shop, from the number and variety of the things it contained, was overturned, but was got on its wheels again with great labor and trouble.

At Ghoor Mr. Reinagle discovered that he was the only sufferer by a theft which had been committed at some previous halting-place on the road. The luggage had all been piled in the vestibule of the inn; and the door being left temptingly open, while every one flew to the fires to try and get a little warmth into him, some thief availed himself of the opportunity and carried off the seat of the curriole, which chanced to be uppermost, and contained all the worldly goods Mr. Reinagle had brought with him.

Everything I had [he writes] was packed in the curriole-seat—clothes, boots, shoes, shaving tackle, letters, memoranda, and, to my grief, my journal, containing descriptions and drawings of fine pictures, costumes of various provinces, peculiarities of divers kinds too numerous to catalogue. I could bear with patience the loss of all my effects, as I could procure others; but my elaborate journal nothing could compensate for; and though it is now sixty years since the loss, I have not ceased grieving whenever it crosses my mind.

Frederick the valet, a valuable servant who acted as interpreter with the country people, had unfortunately been left behind on the road, looking for his horse, or he no doubt would have succeeded in tracking the thief and recovering the property, for it was quite certain that no one could have carried the heavy curriole-seat far.

At Ghoor, to their joy and great surprise, the fugitives found the people "most obliging, infinitely more so than any they had hitherto met on the whole route." But it was here also that they

had so many proofs of the extreme severity of the weather.

On arriving, Mr. Reinagle found that his legs were frozen, and mustered enough Dutch to explain that he wanted two pails of snow and two men to rub him. It was bitterly cold work, and the pain was intense, but after half an hour's hard rubbing circulation was restored.

The coachman, who with the grooms, Hussar, and a host of travellers, got close to the fire, imprudently took off his boots to warm his feet, and in a few days lost all his toes in consequence. Even the very brandy was frozen, and when the captain attempted to write a despatch to the War Office, not only had he first to boil the ink, but though he and his secretary sat so close into the fire that they feared their legs and clothes would be scorched, the ink froze before their pens reached the paper, and it was impossible to proceed. Cups washed in warm water froze before they could be wiped; the milk taken from a cow in a barn a hundred yards or so distant, froze solid as it was being brought to the house. Breath froze on the windows to the thickness of a crown piece, making it quite impossible to see out of them. Hot tea froze the instant it was spilt, so that cups and saucers were firmly cemented together, and the table, upon which was no cloth, was covered instead with a sheet of ice. The bread, which in its frozen state was as hard as a stone, took half an hour to thaw close to the fire, and it was three-quarters of an hour before it could be made fit to eat. Beards, moustachios, and even eye lashes were decorated with lumps of ice; and horses which arrived steaming, had no sooner halted than they were clothed in a coat of mail. Numbers of men and women who travelled on foot lost noses, ears, fingers, and toes from frost-bite.

After leaving Ghoor, the cavalcade halted next at a wretched, poverty-stricken little place, where the houses were built with conical roofs in place of chimneys, and had absolutely no windows. The upper half of each hovel was of wood, and the appearance of the village altogether was such that the travellers felt as if they had left Europe for some barbarous, unknown land, and wondered dismally what experiences might be in store for them as they advanced farther. After travelling all day at a foot's pace they reached Enchide, but it was impossible to stop there, for the troops had come up with them again, and all available lodgings were assigned to them by the chief magistrate,

who assured Captain Woodford that he would find accommodation provided for his party a league farther on.

By this time it was quite dark, and travelling was a very serious matter: for a rapid thaw had set in, and the road was under water and in such a dangerous state that the drivers of carriage, curricule, and wagon every moment expected some disastrous accident. They had indeed a very narrow escape of driving over a bank, which if they had done, it would have been impossible to rescue them till the morning; but at length they reached the village safe and sound, though it was fully double the distance they had been told, and was moreover beyond the boundaries of Holland. The magistrate had only wanted to get rid of them, and no doubt congratulated himself on his success; for the hatred to us English was universal. Every man, woman, and child was our bitter enemy, thanks to the pillaging, burning, and destroying of all that came in their way, practised by our troops. "Not a cottage within any distance" of their route was spared; for wherever the inhabitants dared to resist the plunderers, their houses were fired.

"As to our officers being present to save the harmless country-people, none came within the range of our observation," says Mr. Reinagle.

Meanwhile, the quarters promised by the magistrate of Enchide of course proved a myth, and the people of the post-house wanted to send the unfortunate travellers still farther on, declaring that they had no accommodation at all either for them or their horses. There was nothing for it but to remain in the street, and though famishing with hunger and perishing with the intense cold, they were refused permission even to prepare a meal of their own food. It was eight o'clock when they first arrived, and Captain Woodford, who had remained at Enchide with the Duc de Castries, on rejoining them some two hours later, found them still without shelter. He too was refused admission, and the people made as much disturbance as if they expected every soul to be murdered and every house pillaged; which, poor things, perhaps *they did*.

However it was impossible to remain in the streets all night, and at last, losing patience, the captain seized a pair of pistols, his secretary a sabre, and Frederick the valet, dismounting from his horse, drew his sword and uttered a volley of "Dutch thunder" in so vehement a manner, that presently room was found for all

the horses in a church, which had lately been used as a place of confinement for some French prisoners. Also a single room was allotted to them at the burgo-master's, and being made warm and comfortable, it was an exquisite delight to the wayworn party, after travelling a whole day, exposed to such cold as the English in general can form no idea of.

The cook did his best with the provisions, cleaving both bread and meat with a hatchet, and they found, as they had often done before, that rough as the cookery necessarily was, anything made eatable was a perfect feast, for they felt as cold inside as out.

There were two beds for the three, and "amazingly uncomfortable" they found them; for instead of warm blankets, they had no covering but a feather-bed. It was their first experience of this variety of bedclothes; and as there was no contrivance to keep this "balloon" in its place, every "hasty turn whisked it off." Mr. Reinagle seems also to have been further disconcerted by a malicious suggestion of the captain's that the travellers they had seen below were presently coming up to take their places *on the top* of the said feather-beds.

All through Westphalia, until they reached Pymont, the beds, whenever they had any, were of this kind. Counterpanes there were none, and blankets were a rarity.

The next morning the procession started again and steered for Steinfurt, along a wretched, winding road, filled with ruts two feet deep, and large hidden holes full of snow, slush, and broken ice. The Westphalian roads were, too, often so narrow, besides being bounded on either side by banks of earth, that it was impossible for two vehicles to pass one another. Moreover, the axles of the English carriages were wider than those of the country and gave infinite trouble; one side of each carriage was always up and the other down, and as they changed places every two or three minutes, the occupants were rocked to and fro and bounced about to such a degree that they were in momentary expectation of being upset or at least of having axles and traces broken.

They passed no village on the way, but the country was dotted with farmhouses, barns, and cottages, a pleasant sight after the barren, sandy waste through which they had lately passed, where the only "view" was a dark streak on the horizon, indicating that there were a few trees or bushes some six or eight miles off.

At Steinfurt they fell in with the Marquis d'Auticham, who was under immediate orders to march his emigrant regiment to Pymont, and, as the Hessian baggage-train with the sick had now come up, Captain Woodford hastened to leave the place, in order that he might keep ahead of them all.

Before they could muster their train, however, the soldiery were in advance of them, and they took another road, which, though less direct, gave them the advantage of being able to proceed at something more than a foot-pace, their usual rate of progress when preceded by the troops.

The frost was still most severe, the air glittering with frozen particles. Münster was reached at 2 P.M.

The Westphalians [remarks Mr. Reinagle] are very very ugly, and the clumsiest people we had seen in our wandering travels; to us they appeared like ugly cows dressed out in all sorts of colored ribbons, on a May-day of times long passed by.

On the day following their arrival in Münster, a sudden and rapid thaw set in, making rivers of water, and mud more than ankle-deep in all directions; and the wind from having been bitter in the extreme, now veered to the south and was as warm as if it had been blowing from the mouth of an oven. The change was so seemingly instantaneous as to cause general illness, and nearly every one caught a severe cold as if by magic. At nightfall, however, there was another change; snow began to fall, and the frost returned.

After a couple of days' rest, the train started again, and travelled along worn-out, deeply-rutted roads, beset with holes and half-frozen pools, where they were in constant peril from the masses of ice through which horses and vehicles had to break their way. The baggage-wagon succumbed at last, the axle-tree being broken in two by a sudden descent into an unsuspected hole full of water and ice. This happened at dusk, when they were just a league from their last halting-place, Warendorf, and had still a league to travel before they should reach Nieukerk. Under these circumstances there was no alternative for them but to retrace their steps, leaving the wagon to be repaired by a blacksmith and carpenter, who were fortunately within reach, and by dint of working all night, succeeded in making the vehicle fit for use the next day.

On their way back to Warendorf they fell in with other travellers, baffled like

themselves, who told them that a little farther on there was a dangerous piece of water which they had been unable to pass, for it was covered with ice just so thick that the horses could not break it through, yet not thick enough to support the weight of coaches and waggons, and the current beneath was so rapid as to afford little chance of escape to those who once fell in. Indeed, one large coach, drawn by four horses, had become jammed in the ice, while attempting to pass, and was so deeply and firmly embedded, that the horses, the driver, and all the occupants, men, women, and children, were drowned.

When our party set out again, therefore, they thought it well to hire a guide and take a circuitous route to avoid this dangerous spot. The road recommended to them was said to be good all the way to Custerlot, but when they had passed Rheda, it was found to be completely inundated, frozen over, and impassable. The road was narrow, the banks steep, and the horses were sunk above the girths in water and ice, as with great difficulty and no little danger they struggled up the bank and into the meadows which bordered the road, dragging their respective vehicles after them. The cook's wagon had the narrowest possible escape from being overturned into the water; but all at last were safely landed. The cold, meantime, continued so severe as almost to disable those who were exposed to it. "The captain always travelled with a large French poodle, which did duty as a muff, and enabled him to keep his delicate white hands tolerably warm."

On they went again, now over frozen fallow ground, now breaking their way through fields of ice, now wading through water, now jolting along over ploughed fields, which racked both carriages and occupants almost to pieces, and now crossing an extemporized bridge of planks, which had been laid across some deep water running with a strong current, and was but just wide enough for the vehicles.

The heavy baggage-wagon was the only one to be damaged, and that was left behind at a farmhouse to be repaired, the driver being directed to follow his master by the marks left by the wheels on the frozen ground. On they went, zig-zagging in and out of plantations, through fields and drifted beds of snow, so deep that it was impossible to foresee what would happen for two minutes together. They fell in with no other travellers, nor even a

single human being of any sort, so no wonder they looked upon the country as "an untrodden, unknown wild."

The jolting and twisting were intolerable and exhausting, from the constant muscular exertion required to enable them to keep their seats.

Frequently they were obliged to take to the road, or any such apology for a road as presented itself; now they passed over ice which bore their weight for a certain distance and then gave way, when all fell in together, with a general shout of "danger ahead," and every effort was needed before they could extricate themselves; then they would get on the ice again, and in a few minutes the same scene was repeated, much to the alarm of the fine-spirited horses. In one place they encountered a deep hollow, filled with water and frozen hard, except in some parts where it had been broken; the carriages dropped in with alarming force, and the poor struggling horses, up to the girths in water, could hardly be made to continue their fearful work. Some of these pitfalls were scarcely more than three or four feet long, and when the carriages got jammed in them, which they did every few minutes, for they only emerged from one deep, ice-filled hole to fall into another still deeper, the kicking and plunging of the horses was something fearful. To add to the difficulty of the journey, every here and there was a "gate," that is, a long piece of wood, very large and bossy at one end, and very taper at the other, being supported on a swivel. These gates or barriers not being set sufficiently wide open, required the utmost dexterity on the part of the drivers, to avoid either dashing against the side-posts, or having the taper end of the log of wood driven through the body of the vehicles. Even where the road was what might be called good, in comparison, it was still so bad that no farmer's wagon would have attempted it, and the only wonder was that the carriages did not sustain more serious damage.

Travellers we found as rare as birds of paradise [writes Mr. Reinagle]. Not one did we ever meet either on foot, on horseback, or in a wagon. The fact was that no human being could find a safe footing anywhere in these straits and ravines of ice, water and mud, years old. No repairs ever take place in all the north of Germany.

It would indeed have been a matter of danger to meet even a man on horseback,

for in certain parts of the road it would have been impossible for him to pass.

After leaving Bielfeld the travellers proceeded as before, advancing barely one mile an hour, and still beset as they had been for days and days by hard frost, ice, and snow. As the day advanced, rain fell in torrents and was succeeded by a heavy fall of snow.

The travellers now began to think and hope that they must be drawing near Pymont, though no signs of it appeared, and the road became rather worse than better. The chariot fell into a large hole, where it was in great danger of being entirely swamped; then all the carriages got jammed in as fast as if they had taken root, and it took two hours' hard work to extricate them.

They had entered the principality of Waldeck a day or two previously, but had travelled so constantly through forests, to avoid the so-called roads, where it was possible, that for hours together they saw no human habitation, and they could not accurately tell whereabouts they might be. Not a road in Waldeck ever got mended, according to our writer, and great lumps of rock constantly threatened to overturn the vehicles. The cook's wagon did get upset at last, but this was the final catastrophe of the kind, for shortly after smoke was seen rising above the trees in the distance, and in another half-hour the weary travellers drove up to the Bath Hotel, Pymont, where they were met and joyously greeted by the friends who had arrived before them, and were filled with as much surprise at the sight of the large rooms, good-looking furniture, tables and chairs, as if they had never seen the like before.

Though it was now the month of March, the cold was still so severe that M. Devaux was wearing a "huge fine sable-skin muff." The frost did not finally break up until the middle of April, having then lasted four months, during which time the numbers of lives lost and the misery endured are probably almost without a parallel.

The papers from which the above particulars and extracts are taken were compiled by Mr. Reinagle from his diaries in the year 1853, and he thus winds up the narration:—

Were I or any of us to live a thousand years, we could not forget the thousands of miraculous escapes for our lives we had encountered. I, the author of these memoranda, have reached my eightieth year minus one month.

BARON VON REINAGLE, R.A., 1853.

From The Spectator.

SIR GEORGE JESSEL.

SIR GEORGE JESSEL, Master of the Rolls, and head of the Court of Appeal, died early on Wednesday morning, March 21, after a dangerous illness of some weeks, during only the last two days of which did he consent to remit any of his usual work. Sir George was by common consent the ablest judge on the bench, and the ablest probably in the annals of English history, if, at least, the rapid despatch of business be taken into account, as well as the soundness of the judgments and the breadth of the legal principles embodied in them. Less brilliant than many other judges of his time in mere form, he far surpassed most, if not all, of them in the rapidity and efficiency of his judicial work. As a barrister, he had few equals, and we have heard, on what we believe to be good authority, that during the last twelve months of his solicitor-generalship, — a year of strain which no doubt permanently affected his constitution, — his fees amounted to the enormous total of £23,000. Moreover, Sir George Jessel's work was never superficially done, and during the latter years of his judicial work he undertook the duties of vice-chancellor of his own university, the University of London, which he discharged with extraordinary fidelity and ability. He died at the age of fifty nine. The late judge was absolutely faithful to his hereditary Jewish creed, and was buried yesterday in the Jewish cemetery at Willesden, among his own people.

One of the greatest administrative forces in England has disappeared with Sir George Jessel. A more extraordinary intellectual engine than his brain has not been seen at work in our generation. Great as he was as a pure lawyer, he was still greater in the despatch of business; for the speed, and the marvellous accuracy on the whole with which he worked at so great a speed, were certainly neither rivalled nor approached by any contemporary of his own. People called him a very strong man, and so he was, but in his own line his swiftness was more marvellous than his strength, and, indeed, sometimes misled him, though it would hardly be just to say that the State would have gained by any subtraction from that speed, for his mistakes were rare and trivial in proportion to the efficiency of the industry which his great velocity of thought enabled him to achieve. He was what Carlyle would have called "a great

captain of industry," only the industry in which he was a captain was a learned industry of a very high order of delicacy and skill, which it took a man of very singular attainments to superintend, and hasten, and arrest, and appreciate, with Sir George Jessel's rareness of discrimination. He had usually mastered the drift of an argument before it was half out of the counsel's mouth, and had taken in the exact drift of a deed before any other man would have got at its general scope and tendency. The immense self-confidence with which he was obviously endowed was in his case not, as it so often is, the result of a misleading sanguineness and eagerness of temperament, which makes a man leap before he looks, but simply the self-confidence of a mind which had found its anticipations fully verified ten times or oftener for every case of failure. And the evidence of this was that Sir George Jessel never even wished to persevere in maintaining a false position, when once he had discovered it. He was always anxious to acknowledge and correct a mistake, for error was vexatious to him not because it was he who had been wrong, but simply because it was error. He had one of those vigorous minds which delight in orderly arrangement, and are almost more scandalized to find a fact classified wrongly, if it is their own mistake, than they are if it be the mistake of another. Imperious as he was in guiding the deliberations or arguments of others, it was the imperiousness of a true genius for despatch of business, not the imperiousness of self-will. We should like to have seen him tried as speaker of the House of Commons, though opinion is as yet hardly ripe for so strong a curb-rein as his over the unbridled loquacity of some members of the House of Commons. Still, those who could force him to consider any point which he had really overlooked, were always rewarded by finding that he did not make light of its bearing simply because he had happened to overlook it. His impatience was the impatience of a keen, swift mind, scandalized by any needless waste of labor, not of an excitable mind, irritated by opposition. Indeed, no opposition that was firm and lucid ever ruffled him in the least. In this respect, he had the true judicial temper. He would always insist on recognizing the strong points of the view he rejected, as distinctly as he recognized the strong points of the view he adopted. We may, perhaps, rightly call a mind of this kind

imperious, if it rides rough-shod over weaker and slower intellects, and to this extent Sir George Jessel was imperious. But it was, strictly speaking, the imperiousness of high faculty measuring itself against what usually proved to be weaker faculty, not the imperiousness of prestige, audacity, or caprice. Indeed, of caprice there was not a trace in the master of the rolls, and of the sense of his own prestige, and of audacity, only so much as must accompany more or less the consciousness of singularly high powers.

Of course, these powers were limited in number, though they were, speaking comparatively, almost unlimited in degree. Sir George Jessel had not, like the great Jewish contemporary who achieved a still higher fame in politics, any unique insight into other men. He was not skilful in the use of social weapons. He had no great stores of banter or wit at his command. His speeches in Parliament were not of the first order, even for the speeches of a solicitor-general. He was not as persuasive as Sir Henry James, nor anything like as lucid in the exposition of political issues as Sir Farrer Herschell. Marvelous as his powers were, they were probably never shown to less advantage than during his short Parliamentary career. For in the forms of things he was not a master. He was deficient in tact, in the art of literary and popular exposition; and appeals to feelings he either despised or could not understand. Even as a lawyer, he had not that command of caustic and ironic dialectic which gave to some of his earlier contemporaries, like Lord Westbury and Vice-Chancellor Knight Bruce, so unique a fame. Sir George Jessel's intellect went straight to the subject-matter of legal issues, and never wasted time with the apparel in which they were dressed up. He was a Titan in his way, but part of his force consisted in his inability to deal with the mere superficial forms of argument, and the necessity he felt himself under of going straight to the true issue. That is why we ventured to call him a captain of industry; for he always sought to economize industry to the utmost, and probably it would be difficult to find any two of his contemporaries, however eminent, who, taken together, got through so much *sound* work in the same time as he did, without ever knowing apparently what overwork meant. His appetite for work was something vast. Nothing pleased him better, when he came to the end of one heavy task, than at once to undertake

another which he might easily have declined. The spectacle of his last struggle with a mortal disease was something more than impressive. For many weeks he discharged every duty, not only in his court, but in relation to volunteer offices for omitting which he could well have pleaded illness, and this when he was so dangerously ill that to take a step upstairs without assistance was impossible, and when at times it was an effort to him to speak at all. When urged by his doctors to keep quiet, he pleaded that he was more equal to work than he was to idleness, and that he should be better if he shrank from none of his usual duties. And for a time, — though he recovered much of his old energy towards the end, — he went through all his judicial and administrative and academical duties, — he was Vice-Chancellor of his own university, the University of London, — with punctual precision, though looking like the ghost of himself, laboring under the oppression of more than one organic disease, and threatened by that failure of the heart of which in the end he died. To see that wonderful engine in his brain working at half, or less than half, its usual pressure of steam, as the life in him flickered low during the struggle of his powerful frame with the last enemy, was a strange, a painful, but in some sense an inspiring sight for commoner and weaker mortals. There was something of the Hercules in Sir George Jessel.

Sir George Jessel was a curiously accomplished man, at college both a first-rate mathematician and a good classic, — that he was a considerable Hebrew scholar was, perhaps, not remarkable, considering his race and faith, — otherwise also a good linguist, and at one time he had a good and scientific knowledge of botany, as well, we believe, as of others of the classificatory sciences. Indeed, part of his grasp of law was due not only to the immense keenness and swiftness of his general intellect, but to his marked capacity for sound classification. His ability was, however, all in the region of what is called positive knowledge. He had little taste and little special capacity for philosophy or literature, though he was so strong a man that there was no subject on which he had informed himself at all on which his judgment was without value. However, it was for his swift and accurate discharge of the highest judicial work that he will be best and most justly remembered. In our time, there has been no administrative engine so marvellous in its

achievements, so strong, and yet so accurate, as the judicial power of Sir George Jessel.

From The Spectator.

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM AT GENEVA.

THOUGH among the thirty thousand foreigners who have chosen Geneva as their temporary dwelling-place there is a considerable proportion of Russian Nihilists, French Anarchists, and German Social Democrats, the authorities are never in fear of dynamite, and the slender police force keeps order without difficulty. This arises from the fact that, except for religious enthusiasts, the Genevan government is one of the most tolerant in Europe. Revolutionary refugees enjoy privileges there which they can command nowhere else on the Continent, and they are careful not to risk expulsion by proceedings of a nature to imperil the public peace or embroil the Confederation with foreign powers. Sometimes, as in the case of Prince Krapotkine (who was expelled for publishing, under his signature, a too violent protestation against the execution of Sophia Petrowska, and parading the town at the head of an Anarchist procession), they overstep the line which divides liberty from license; but as a rule, they take their measures so well, that the police have rarely to interfere. For instance, if the *Révolution*, which preaches the gospel of dynamite and the duty of murder with a ferocity that is positively appalling, were openly conducted by foreigners, they would certainly be expelled and the paper suppressed, a fate that a few years ago befell the Anarchist *Avant Garde*, of-Chaux de Fonds; but the nominal editor and publisher being Swiss, they cannot be touched, albeit, as is well-known, the contributors are Russian refugees and French Socialists.

The avowed Anarchists at Geneva are probably under a hundred. Even on so important an occasion as the recent manifestation in memory of the Paris Commune, they could not muster more than one hundred and fifty, of whom at least one-half were outsiders. Social Democrats who seek to reorganize society rather by a revolution of the State than its utter destruction are more numerous, and include in their ranks a score or two of Genevan artisans and a few workmen from German Switzerland. On Sunday last they, too, celebrated by a meeting

the anniversary of the Commune. The meeting was held in the Tonhalle, the assembly-room of a *café brassier*, and except that the chairman was armed with a bell, which he frequently used, and the audience smoked hugely and consumed much beer, the proceedings did not differ materially from those of an English meeting. Touching oratorical effect, however, the speeches were decidedly superior to the speeches generally delivered at political gatherings in England. Dullness the audience would by no means tolerate. If an orator became a little tedious, he was warned by cries of "*A Peau!*" and "*Plus haut!*" either to speak better and louder, or sit down. The former of these expressions did not, as may be supposed, signify that he was in danger of being thrown into the lake, but that recourse to the decanter of water that stood before him might, perchance, enliven his waning eloquence. On the other hand, the speeches were marked by an entire absence of argument. The style of these was that of Rollo's address to the Peruvians, dear to our childhood, and of Bruce's address to his soldiers before the Battle of Bannockburn. They abounded in such phrases as "Down with the aristocrats!" "Crush the bourgeoisie!" "Restore to the disinherited the fruits of their labor;" and wealth and tyranny, poverty and virtue, were treated as convertible terms. The government of Switzerland received no better measure than that of neighboring monarchies. One speaker, who described himself as a Swiss workman, adduced as proof of the inefficiency of the present republican institutions that in Geneva—relatively to its size one of the richest of European cities—there are people who lack bread, and that multitudes of Swiss citizens are every year compelled to seek abroad the work they cannot find at home. The panacea for these evils is, of course, the establishment of the social republic; in other words, of Socialism organized by the State. How this is to improve matters, or how any conceivable scheme can protect men from the consequences of their own folly, idleness, and improvidence, nobody condescended to explain. The new republic, moreover, as described by some of its advocates, would, if it could be established, be one of the most grinding tyrannies the world has ever seen.

It is the conception of this truth that has constrained men like Krapotkine and Reclus to the adoption of Anarchism: and between Anarchists and State Socialists there reigns a feud as bitter as ever reigned between orthodox Mahommedans and their Shiite brethren. At Geneva, they could not so far sink their differences as to celebrate in common the anniversary of the "epoch-making" Commune.

The words *faim*, *misère*, *prolétaire*, were often in the mouths of the speakers at this meeting, yet it was abundantly evident that none of them was either poor or hungry, and it may be doubted if they had any right whatever to represent the *prolétariat* whose cause they profess to plead. Workmen some of them may have been, at any rate they said so; but almost all were of the well-fed sort, dressed in broadcloth, and in no respect save by their red badges distinguishable from the bourgeoisie whom they are never tired of reviling. Shortly before the termination of the proceedings, a remarkable incident occurred. While an impassioned and elegantly attired Socialist was denouncing traders and employers in the accepted fashion, a sturdy, brown-faced fellow, one of the very few genuine, hard-fisted sons of toil in the room, asked the speaker to "show his hands." This demand was warmly supported and as warmly opposed, whereupon a disturbance ensued, and the manifestation ended in a free fight and a general skeddaddle.

This incident goes to prove, what those who have studied the question already know, that the *prolétariat* has not yet become Socialist, and that real poverty is least among the causes of Socialism. Its causes are rather to be sought in the spread of knowledge, and the decay of faith. Education is sharpening men's faculties, giving them new desires, making them more apprehensive as to the future and more envious of the rich, at the very time that the increase of scepticism, by depriving them of the hope of immortality and destroying the idea of duty, renders them more resolute to enjoy the present. There are observers who think that the Communistic movement is only in its infancy, and in this opinion the present writer is reluctantly constrained to concur.